A Quarterly of New Literature

ACCENT

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JOHN FREDERICK NIMS: Hey Spinoza!

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OSCAR TARCOV: A Visit

V. ILYENKOV: Fire

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ACCENT

A QUARTERLY OF NEW LITERATURE

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CHRISTOPHER BLOOM:

Seventeen Pictures from Emily's Life

I

She stood at the window, holding back the ruffled curtain with one hand. She was looking down at the carriage, at the sunlight edging the neck of the horse. It was noon. Everything shone still and calm; the white picket fence diminished down the other side of the road, the apricots hung among green leaves. A white cat languidly licked its tail, looking like an intense white spot on the brown of the road. From downstairs she heard the gruff voice of her father raised in anger against the high, whining voice of another man. He's at it again, she thought, twitching the curtain back in place and flinging herself into a horsehair chair; always thinking he's right. Thank God I'll be going away to college in the fall.

II

One candle burned at her mother's head. The flame threw spiral wavering shadows on the deathwhite face. This is what she saw and heard when she opened the door: the hand of her mother moving slightly, her mother's mouth mothwhispering her name. She thrust down an impulse to scream, glided to her mother's side, fell over the body, cried. Now, she thought, now I can't go to college.

III

She flung down the book and began to cry. From the kitchen drifted steamy odors of cabbage and rice. She heard her father's feet shuffling in his room.

IV

The rain poured down. The road splashed muddily, spotting her shoes and dress. She heard a noise behind her, then a churning, a choking. She turned to see a young man perched in a horseless carriage. He was wearing goggles and a black and white checkered cap, which he raised. "Want a ride, lady?" he said. "You'll be in the rain but you'll get there a lot quicker."

V

She twirled her wedding bouquet between her fingers, picked the petals off a forget-me-not. When she heard the flushing of the toilet and his footsteps growing in the hallway, she flung the bouquet away, blew her nose, and wiped the tears out of her eyes with the back of one hand. She tried to smile. He was at the door and at the same time she heard her father battering around in the next room, muttering curses to himself. She fell on the bed and sobbed into the pillow.

VI

When she stood for the first time in the living room of their new house, white birds began rushing upward in her stomach. She knelt in the middle of the floor, scooped a pile of shavings into her hands, threw them in the air. They showered over her, some catching in her hair, some on her dress. In the elongated rectangle of light they looked like yellow flowers. She pressed them against her mouth and nose, drinking their new wood fragrance. They were flowers of freedom. She made a garland and placed it on her head. Her husband's figure filled the doorway, shutting away the light that had blurred the shavings to yellow flowers. She held a handful out to him, their curls jiggling between her fingers. She smiled at him. "Look!" she said. "Smell them. They smell so good." But he scowled. He took the garland from her head, jerked her to her feet, and began talking about the fireplace.

VII

It looks like him, she thought. She had wanted a girl. It was a little pink squirming boy, the ugliest baby she had seen. Its head was lopsided; its ears seemed to be glued to the sides of its head. When her husband came tiptoeing in she turned to the wall and pretended to be asleep.

VIII

The metronome ticked on top of the piano. She sat on the bench, her fingers laboriously following the notes of the simplest Chopin Etude. She was going over the difficult part again and again. Her eyes were beginning to fill with tears when she knew that her boy was standing and watching. "That's not right, Mama," he said. "That sounds awful."

IX

She was walking along the boardwalk at the seashore with the baby and the boy when she saw a crowd of people by the fishing pier. A pink dot emerged from the crowd, bobbing forward between two dark dots. She heard tinkling laughter and low voices. The pink dot and the dark dots gradually expanded into an old girl friend and two unknown men. The crowd in the background began to disperse. The pink came running forward, laughing and holding out her hands, the bow on her head dancing in the sunlight. The girl in pink opened her painted mouth. "Emily!" she cried. Emily smiled, shifted the baby to her other arm and put out her hand. "I haven't seen you for a long time," said Emily. "What have you been doing?" The girl in pink threw back her head and laughed, her curls leaping up and down like things of joy. "I just escaped from that crowd—everyone wanted my autograph." The girl made an indifferent backward gesture with one hand. "Haven't you *heard,* Emily? After I was through college I sang on the stage for eight years, and I've just signed with the *opera*!"

X

She opened the drawer and found everything tumbled and tossed together in a heap. Reaching under the pile she drew out a rectangle of cardboard and saw that it was torn, the gold seal in the corner wrinkled and the blue ribbon smeared with a fingerprint. Oh those children! Those children! And she began to cry, pressing her high school diploma against her breast.

XI

The girl shoved some papers in her hands. "I drew these of you, Mama, because you're so beautiful."

XII

"We don't have the money to send her to art school I tell you," he said, standing very masculine in the doorway. She stopped beating the eggs, looked at her husband, pursed her mouth. "She's willing to work for part of it." She twirled the beater furiously. She was beating her father and her husband, she was beating everyone who had been cruel to her and had kept her from becoming an artist like the pink girl with a painted mouth she had seen on the beach a long time ago. She was beating her husband because he was going to ruin the life of her daughter. "Besides," he said, shifting his clumsy weight to the other foot, folding his hairy arms. "No girl of mine is going to waste my money learning any such foolishness. She should be learning how to cook." Emily straightened up. She heard the joints snapping along her spine; she heard the hissing of the gas burners, the popping of steak in the broiler, her husband's breathing and the ticking of the clock. "If you don't send her to school I'll kill myself," she said.

XIII

"It is beautiful," said Emily, standing in front of the delicate plaster figure of a man. Her daughter stood beside her, arms akimbo. Sunlight streamed through the window in the roof. The figure was alive; its contours flowed; its nakedness was her own; she had created the woman who had created this figure. "I always wanted to do something like that," she said, turning to her daughter. The girl hugged her, rubbing the plaster smudge on her face across Emily's cheek. "You could have, Mother," she said, "if you'd had a chance."

XIV

It was not until after the funeral, in her old room in her father's house, that she began to cry. She had seen them lower the casket into the grave, had seen them shovel the dirt, had heard them singing the hymn, all without emotion. She had stood staring at the white mausoleum, wishing she had money enough to bury him in one of the cool corridors with a bronze plaque screwed on a marble slab. It was not until she lay across her old bed, smelling the musty odor of the long shut room and hearing the voices of people downstairs, her father's rasping ancient voice rising above them all in a tone of dogmatic despotism, that she began to cry.

XV

"Papa," she said, "you eat those potatoes. I spent all morning getting them ready." The old man banged his fork on the table. A swinging gossamer of spittle dropped from his mouth to the napkin, snapped, made a spot. "God-damn it!" he cried. "You've got brains enough to know I like my potatoes mashed!"

XVI

For the sixth time that morning she reached in the mailbox. Her fingers touched the edge of an envelope. Trembling, expectant, the white birds rushing upward in her stomach, she pulled the letter out. But instead of her daughter's name, the return address in the corner read: BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY.

XVII

When she came into the room and saw the miniature figure her daughter had given her smashed on the floor, she wanted to take up the letter-knife and run after her father or her son, one of whom she knew in his clumsiness had swept the figure off the table. She felt as if the figure had been herself, that she had been demolished, and she wanted only revenge. She wanted to slash their faces and their hands, to jab the knife in their eyes. But instead she sat down on the floor and began picking up the pieces one by one.

T. WEISS:

Gerard Manley Hopkins: Realist on Parnassus

Gerald Manley Hopkins has several times been impeached for inaugurating prepossession with literary rather than human ends; rather than employing his pen for forthright expression, he has spent himself on expression itself. He, some maintain, reflects the romantic retreat from life into the ivory tower of art, on the one hand, and of religion, on the other. But his life, I will attempt to show, proves not only the ruthlessness of art in its exposure of the basic inacceptability for him of religion, but also the common incompatibility today between art and religion. An art as piercing and rigorously honest as Hopkins' could allow him little contentment with what became for him increasingly evasion.

Within himself Hopkins encompassed both belief and its merciless turning upon itself. His life, accordingly, epitomizes the career of the last hundred years. Because of this religious doubt, in our day poets have clung more and more to the immediate, for its own sake. A visible god, some tell us, is necessary for the welling up of hymns, poised and passionate, such as antiquity enjoyed; Hopkins, however, yearning for the hymn, had only the words, not the vision to support this yearning. I agree that this hymnic urge was a constant pressure within him. But I maintain that in his earlier days he knew such a visibility of wonder. For him the spiritual world experienced no dichotomy from the earthly one. The imputation that his poetry lacks profundity of content, inscape if you will, fails the obvious truth of his early poetry. He saw profundity everywhere. Inscapes were as casual as birds upon a twig and as radiantly sure. In the beginning of his faith, as in the Eden beginning, the world *was* inscape—the content of God. So all Hopkins needed to do to be supremely spiritual was copy God's handiwork, bring it to others less aware. Adam-wise, he went about his rapturous business of naming his world and trimming the wanton growths from his senses' precisions. No distance distracted his senses from his world; they were a crystalline one.

Hopkins, though he would have probably stoutly denied it, was intrigued not so much by "the fruit of experience, but experience itself." According to him:

> All the world is full of inscape and chance left free to act falls into an order as well as purpose: looking out of my window I caught it in the random clods and broken heaps of snow made by the cast of a broom. The same of the path trenched by footsteps in ankle deep snow across the fields.

How closely this approaches the climax of Pater's "Conclusion" I need not say. Also like Pater, one of his teachers, Hopkins lamented the plethora of unappreciated beauty. For beauty, he believed, is "the virtue of inscape" or the

floruit, the maturity, of an object's form and being. Talking of the hay stacked in a barn, he says:

> I thought how sadly beauty of inscape was unknown and buried away from simple people and yet how near at hand it was if they had eyes to see it and it could be called out everywhere again.

But Hopkins' inscape enjoyed wider scope than Pater's beauty-quest.

> It is not that inscape does not govern the behaviour of things in slack and decay as one can see even in the pining of the skin in the old and even in a skeleton but that horror prepossesses the mind.

The withering flower, the rotting body have a ripeness of their own and approach realization of the metaphor peculiar to this condition of being. Ripeness is all.

As his *Notebooks* tell us, Hopkins early put himself to the sweet duty of direct observation. Largely relieved, at least in his younger years, of the basic spiritual problems, he could give himself to objective worship. We need to believe and to articulate our belief chiefly when we need or desire something; the Edenites, the pure pagans, and Hopkins for a moment were free of the need. Indeed, so thingful and moralless are his observations, they strike one almost as purely pagan: sight is sufficiency. Examples drawn from his Notebooks readily illustrate his well-nigh unparalleled acuteness and delicacy of perception. His is the terrible crystal of clarity.

> Sometimes I hear the Cuckoo with wonderful clear and plump and fluty notes; it is when the hollow of a rising ground conceives them and palms them up and throws them out, like blowing into a big humming ewer.

Or:

> July 22—Very hot, though the wind, which was south, dappled very sweetly on one's face and when I came out I seemed to put it on like a gown as a man puts on the shadow he walks into and hoods or hats himself with the shelter of a roof, a penthouse, or a copse of trees, I mean it rippled and fluttered like light linen, one could feel the folds and braids of it—and indeed a floating flag is like wind visible and what weeds are in a current; it gives it thew and fires it and bloods it in.

Or:

> At the end of the month hard frosts wonderful downpour of leaf: when the morning sun began to melt the frost they fell at one touch and in a few minutes a whole tree was flung of them; they lay mashing and papering the ground at the foot. Then the tree seems to be looking down on its cast self as blue sky on snow after a long fall, its losing, its doing.

Or his study of clouds, a patient delight suggesting that he wrote as though inside things, looking out: he is their instress or inscape. Many of these for sheer strength of description, the force of simple concrete words, are superb

imagist poems, almost bewildering in their brilliant plenitude of detail. By his faithfulness to fact, Hopkins proves himself a scientist or profound scholar of observation and little the mystic. Yet in his degree of perception he surpasses most men and reaches a perspicuity and a passion of detachment that might "save" all of us. One critic has suggested, "Nowhere in his work does he draw on an experience . . . beyond the range of any thoughtful and sensitive Catholic who meditates on his Faith." In fact, he does not draw on an experience beyond the range of any thoughtful and sensitive man. Hopkins' treatment, however, his experience of intensity and imagination, is something to challenge anyone.

Thus those impatient of his exacting have sometimes dubbed him a great stutterer; but his is the stutter of ecstacy, the overflow of fervor and embrace when words buckle and fuse. The voice of passion is not loose and by its speed not clear. To a certain extent, therefore, Hopkins resembles his own portrait of Browning:

> . . . Browning has, I think, many frigidities. Any untruth to nature, to human nature, is frigid. Now he has got . . . a way of talking . . . with the air and spirit of a man bouncing up from the table with his mouth full of bread and cheese and saying that he meant to stand no blasted nonsense . . . The effect of this style is a frigid bluster.

We may wonder whether Hopkins' later conduct was not somewhat antithetical to human nature. (As he himself admitted, congratulating Bridges on his engagement: "A single life is a difficult, not altogether a natural life.") Much of Hopkins' poetry also seems to bounce up, not with a mouthful of bread and cheese, but with a mouthful of praise and rapture where syllables in their rush trip over each other. So he seeks to convey his hurlyburly of soar by suppressing unstressed syllables. Rockily eruptive and monosyllabic, in his search for the rugged and fierce, his weaker poems are the real sputterers; they try, by manipulation mainly, to reach his best poems, and so degenerate into self-caricature. But Hopkins is difficult because he is direct—a directness that means detachment or anonymity. Once his idiom is understood, in his resolute responsibility to his craft, clarity is constant. At first reading one is immediately struck by new atmosphere, new earth, and new heaven. Hopkins may not construct a new world as Blake or Milton sought to do; he did not need to: it was there before him in overwhelming abundance and before us in every phrase he wrote, almost to be taken for granted.

Here we return to Hopkins' early seity with the earth. The seeming conflict between earth and spirit met with new intensity in the romantic period. Professor Fairchild's *The Romantic Quest* formally discusses this problem under the terms of Transcendentalism and Descendentalism; they embody the Dr. Jekyll-Mr. Hyde elements in human nature. I would attach this modification: Dr. Jekyll is not superior to or separable from Mr. Hyde, and vice versa. These two personalities, two expressions of one individual, are indispensable in the composition of the complete human being. Today, with the tendency of the artistic as well as the political and social world toward anti-intellectualism, the Mr. Hyde personality has gradually superseded Dr. Jekyll as the desideratum of

human conduct. Mr. Hyde is the intuitive, primitive, spontaneous person. This attitude is probably what Hopkins meant when he wrote to Coventry Patmore of the "tykishness" necessary to all artists. Hopkins, however, displayed in much of his life no leaning toward one to the other's exclusion.

Professor Fairchild has remarked of Transcendentalism and Descendentalism: "In romanticism, the two extremes . . . are combined and often reconciled." But he believes that for any large length of time such an alliance is virtually impossible. He designates Wordsworth "the exemplar of that phase of romanticism in which the descendental and transcendental elements are about evenly balanced." Yet even in Wordsworth, Professor Fairchild owns, the reconciliation at best is very shortlived and almost always a strain. Sometime earlier he recognizes a possible solution in Catholicism—a solution Hopkins promptly accepted. Huysmans cited Barbey d'Aurevilly's review of *A Rebours:* " . . . after such a book, it only remains for the author to choose between the muzzle of a pistol and the foot of the cross." And Huysmans answered, "The choice has been made." For a time Hopkins merged beauty and holiness. Catholicism provided him with a firm base which contributed to his temporary calm.

Though hardly a decadent in ambition, Hopkins more than participated in the decadents' almost excessive sensitivity and their paradoxical delight in the stronger pagan parts of nature. And Hopkins was wise and objective enough to appreciate the value of decadence. He answers a letter from Bridges:

> "The first touch of decadence destroys all merit whatever": this is a hard saying. What, all technical merit—as chiaroscuro, anatomical knowledge, expression, feeling, colour, drama. It is plainly too true. And come to that, the age of Raphael and Michelangelo was in a decadence and its excellence is technical. Everything after Giotto is decadent in form, though advancing in execution. Go to.

But though appreciative of decadence, Hopkins in his immediacy of treatment resembles the naif or primitive. This is the fresh and eager spirit of the child and the childlike spirit Wordsworth celebrated in his Intimations Ode. "Growing up," losing his vividness of impression, Wordsworth dwindled as a poet. But even more, Hopkins here approaches what Baudelaire somewhere set forth as the paragon for artists: the child's firm, crisp comprehension of reality concomitant with the mature artist's articulation and control of it. Hopkins, despite the circumstances of his life, retained longer than most this impression-innocence. This naked naiveté was by no means delicate to the point of fragility; if anything was sturdy about Hopkins it was his vision. After he mastered his medium, he never lapsed into the sybaritism of sheer sensation. He represents something like the opposite of *ex forte dulcedo*—more accurately, strength out of sensation and sensitivity. Such mastery must persuade us of the presence of remarkable energy. Only such unjaded power could win through to such luminance of form. Michelangelo believed the forms already exist, buried in the rock, waiting impatiently for their deliverer. But it takes the might of a giant to knock off their stony trammels and release them

into the beauty of expression, to strike the right spring of inspiration in the heart of the rock.

In truth, much of Hopkins' innocence amounts to omniscience—freedom from the fold upon fold of artificiality blinding and binding the senses of "modern" man: such innocence also involves the "tykishness" I earlier mentioned, a trait Hopkins deemed an essential. He explained it to Patmore in this wise:

> As there is something of the "Old Adam" in all but the holiest men and in them at least enough to make them understand it in others so there is an old Adam of barbarism, boyishness, wildness, rawness, rankness, the disreputable, the unrefined in the refined and educated. It is that I mean by tykishness . . .

This "something of the 'Old Adam' " seems a most singular quality for a Jesuit.

That this quality of tykishness originally grained Hopkins' character no one can gainsay. It would have fed his conviction that "There lives the dearest freshness deep down things" and prompted his desire, "O let them be left, wildness and wet: / Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet." The whole world—even that which most of us might consider its debris and filth—he saw as essential. In light of his oneness with objects, the first thing that strikes the reader is the "freshness fuming," the extreme yet natural novelty of Hopkins' world. His ecstasy in earth drove him into terms of foam and fume and flame, but terms accurate and mightily held.

And his grip on the earth also rarely deserted him. Accordingly, he quickly recognized, with misgivings, a kinship in Whitman with his gusto for all degrees of the earth. So too we remember Hopkins' insistence that "Common sense is never out of place anywhere, neither on Parnassus nor on Tabor nor on the Mount where our Lord preached." We remember Hopkins' response to a metaphor by Dixon: "Angels are the very cheapest things in literature." In a similar rational vein Hopkins defined "inspiration," which he believed ascribable to physical causes generally, "as good health or state of the air, or prosaic as it is, length of time after a meal." More, he appreciated the importance of critical concentration upon one's initial creativeness. A most painstaking craftsman, only so could he attain many of the seemingly carelessly cast-off results, the impetuous music that insists we run while we read. As he confessed to Bridges, " . . . I have of myself made verse so laborious." He knew how fruitless out-of-hand frenzy is. His work at best, therefore, shared the superb, almost irritating tension present in the greatest art, that which sets the mind and heart on edge. He took advantage of the gifts of intellect, so much so some critics have concluded that his poetry suffers from "overdiscipline." Such conclusions still harbor the romantic superstition that poetry to be "creative," "original," and the work of genius must be spontaneous—that is, must spring full-panoplied from the head (more accurately, the heart) with little rime and less reason. These critics do not seem to recognize that the critical and technical faculty often lames the creative faculty, not because there is too

much of the former, but because there is not enough. Probably such uncritical critical attitude is part and parcel of the anti-intellectualism rampant in our world. And after all, Hopkins' critical acumen to the contrary notwithstanding, his poetry was at heart, even technically, instinctive. Hopkins' theories tagged his practice; for his rhythms were inherent in his nature. Coventry Patmore, myopic to much of Hopkins' mastery, accused him of truckling to his theories. In a letter to Bridges, Patmore relayed Hopkins' answer: "He assures me that 'his thoughts involuntary moved' in such numbers, and that he did not write them from preconceived theories."

Nor did Hopkins in his hardheadedness wish to reduce nature to man's image or desire. Rather he reveled in its variety and strange wildness. Things "barbarous in beauty" delighted him immeasurably. Spiritually fastidious, rich in the control of conviction, he could luxuriate in the world's plenty, further token of God's graciousness. "Hurrahing in Harvest" was the mood that claimed his first years of Catholicism; "brute beauty" was his ambition. But traveler in reality that he was, he little indulged in a rapture of fantasy. His eyes were in his head.

His importance to us, other than as a metrical influence, is still intensely controverted. Yet memories of Hopkins jut from almost all our younger poets. A rollcall of those influenced would be equivalent nearly to a rollcall of those writing. But many critics still demur as to the extent of his influence; these would limit it to technicalities. If they were correct, his influence would indeed be regrettable. They fail to see how immensely Hopkins' metrics partook of his total sensibility. The reasons for his hold, I suggest, revert to his intimacy with the world as it is—a quality that endears the later work of Yeats to us. Not a few of Hopkins' traits wield a general appeal. With his abiding love for nature in all its myriad behaviors, and with his sensitivity to it achieving a pitch tantamount to a second sense, he writes so magnificently of the visible that the invisible begins to appear. His work should be the finest corrective for poetry the last fifty-odd English years have produced. He denounced the flabbiness and turgidity of much of the romantics. His commitment to sprung rhythm—a rhythm which promised him, he believed, the freedom and directness of expression Wordsworth aspired to—amounted to a declaration of independence and, accordingly, implied constant personal vigilance: the greater the freedom of form the more severe the demands on the individual poet.

But Hopkins has proved himself a prominent citizen of our poetic times in many other ways. Repelled by the excessive limpidities of the Swinburneans, eager to sinew his verse, and attracted to the more turbulent moods of nature, he turned to the hardiness of Anglo-Saxon, a language which has appealed to not a few of the leading poets of our time. In addition, he objurgated the custom of garnishing poems with archaisms. Artificiality he generally abjured: " . . . inversions . . . I do avoid them because they weaken and because they destroy the earnestness or in-earnestness of the utterance." Criticizing Swinburne, he proposes: " . . . a perfect style must be of its age." Even as a poet absorbs the past, he must saturate his work in the rich dyes of his day.

Furthermore, even as Hopkins' artistry best displays itself in his ability to give us poetically transmuted the texture of his delights and his agonies, the fibers that formed his personality—every inch of Hopkins is behind and in his art; so concurrently he wins us with his child and workingman poems. With great love he dwelt on the beauty of manhood. As "Felix Randal" and "Harry Ploughman" testify, he especially joyed in the robustness of the laborer. In his fundamental democracy Hopkins equally felt the strength of the workers' misery. In a letter to Dixon he avows:

> My Liverpool and Glasgow experience laid upon my mind a conviction, a truly crushing conviction, of the misery of town life to the poor and more than to the poor, of the misery of the poor in general, of the degradation even of our race, of the hollowness of the century's civilisation: it made even life a burden to me to have daily thrust upon me the things I saw.

This conviction, growing always more tenacious, became one of the taproots of his eventual overwhelming despondency. Need I indicate his similarity here to Pound, Eliot, and all the other Waste-Landers?

But Hopkins' most explicit statement occurs in one of his early letters to Bridges, his "red letter" as Hopkins later named it.

> I remember that you never relished "the intelligent artisan." I must tell you I am always thinking of the Communist future . . . I am afraid some great revolution is not far off. Horrible to say, in a manner I am a Communist. Their ideal bating some things is nobler than that professed by any secular statesman I know of . . . Besides it is just.—I do not mean the means of getting it are. But it is a dreadful thing for the greatest and most necessary part of a very rich nation to live a hard life without dignity, knowledge, comforts, delights or hopes in the midst of plenty—which plenty they make. They profess that they do not care what they wreck and burn. This is a dreadful look out but what has the old civilisation done for them? As it at present stands in England it is itself in great measure founded on wrecking. But they got none of the spoils, they came in for nothing but harm from it then and thereafter. England has grown hugely wealthy but this wealth has not reached the working classes; I expect it has made their condition worse. Besides this iniquitous order the old civilisation embodies another order mostly old and what is now in direct entail from the old, the old religion, learning, law, art, etc. . . . But as the working classes have not been educated they know next to nothing of all this and cannot be expected to care if they destroy it. The more I look the more black and deservedly black the future looks, so I will write no more.

In the face of the above confession it is little to be wondered the young revolutionary poets held Hopkins dear. For many of them Communism seemed Christianity made flesh. No one would attempt to impugn the fact that Hopkins' utterances stemmed from humanitarian sentiment. But few compassionate churchmen, it seems to me, particularly in Hopkins' day, would confess, " . . . in a manner I am a Communist." Furthermore, how did the great number of Communists begin if not as humanitarians?

Nor did Hopkins ever abandon (could not) his own jealous personality. As he tasted himself above all else in the beginning, so he did unfailingly to

the end—but with what difference! "Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me." How could such a powerful individualism, reminiscent in its strength and in its counter-hunger for humility also of Milton's, how could it yield to the anonymity the Jesuit order exacted—the very thing his individualism by its strength yearned for? For Hopkins continues the struggle of modern man, perhaps first summarized in Milton: the desire for something greater than oneself to believe in—whether religion or the state in our time or, for small people, the conventions of their society—and be disciplined by, and the counter-realization of the demands of the ego and the discipline within. *Lycidas* voices Milton's debate between fame and hedonism; Hopkins' life expresses his wrestling between religion and fame. Perhaps fame in God was not enough. Clearly it was Hopkins' death to hide his truculent talents; they burned through his side. We have learned from his letters of his numerous flirtations with publishing. Probably as much as his fear of outraging his order, his fear of rejection—after several abortive attempts at print—decided him. He shrank from rejection because he craved recognition.

From another point of view, the later, tormented Hopkins must appeal to our poets. Isolated in a faith which the world was hostile to, or worse, increasingly indifferent to and unaffected by, he knew the anguish the more sensitive must experience in our always more crassly materialistic world. For Hopkins' realism was relentless. Rather than cushioning him, his religion in its failure to cope with the pressing problems of his time became more and more suspect. The very integrity that had compelled him to conversion refused to allow him to fail bringing his daily world to bear in test on his belief.

At first sight we would assume that men of, say, Eliot's temperament would especially be drawn to Hopkins. For a few years at least Hopkins enjoyed the full faith Eliot has been seeking. Indeed, it is surprising the ghostly side of Hopkins has not lured Eliot more openly. Perhaps, with his admirable instinct, Eliot has sensed how little of the ghostly side there is to Hopkins! The order of their dilemmas, however, is antipodal. Failing to solve his conflict, Eliot has turned to religion as his *pis aller;* Hopkins, contrariwise, went to religion at once and only gradually discovered himself falling into the abyss, widening steadily, between religion and actuality. For Eliot art and religion are not to be confused; for Hopkins, engaged in, they cannot help being confused. Avoid this delinquent music and listen to God's word. For literature is a worldly occupation; in it one does not serve God. Uneasily his religious applications close his poems; nor was he sure that these "morals" should be there. His sermons, we recall, were models of poetic failure rather than of religious success. But in spite of reasons for affinity, Eliot has shied away from Hopkins. In his *After Strange Gods* Eliot writes:

> His accent . . . is quite different, I am sure, from the correct one. To be converted, in any case, while it is sufficient for entertaining the hope of individual salvation, is not going to do for a man as a writer, what his ancestry and his country for some generations have failed to do.

Why Eliot should hope for more "entertainment" I do not know. He does seem to suggest, however, that one is converted not for one's salvation's sake, but for one's situation as a writer. With his insistent realism, most intent in his writing, Hopkins soon learned how inadequate religion was for him. Eliot here seems to realize it, but he persists in forgetting it.

But the fear of the flesh and the temptations of the appetites that Hopkins, and Eliot too, must have known to an overwhelming degree, and the suppression of these, eventually took their toll. Denied, starved, Hopkins' senses waned. Religion and the earth no longer synonymous for him, in his last years he could not accept the realizations living, with ever more urgent cogency, thrust upon him. Certainly he could no longer reconcile them to his life, religion. This and the ways of acceptance had broken him for the nakedness his realizations required. Bent to the yoke of the cross some twenty years, he could no longer either drop or carry it. His very appreciation that one must live widely in one's day and his touching envy of Shakespeare's profound and vast knowledge of the ways of the world, plus religion's refusal to free him to the infinite delights of this world—these crushed him. His love of literature, and life reflected there, superseded his love of religion. But though the drayhorse once knew youthful full-pastured freedoms, harnessed many years, how shall it finally break away save in death?

Physically too, aside from their fasting and the gnawing of doubt, his senses suffered. As Hopkins put it in a letter to Dixon:

> . . . insight is more sensitive, in fact is more perfect, earlier in life than later and especially toward elementary impressions: I remember that crimsons and pure blues seemed to me spiritual and heavenly sights fit to draw tears once; now I can just see what I once saw, but can hardly dwell on it and should not care to do so.

Once more I recall Wordsworth and Coleridge, those who also momentarily balanced Transcendentalism and Descendentalism. Directly Hopkins' sentiments above echo those of Coleridge's *Dejection*. As Coleridge says of natural beauties:

> I see them all so excellently fair,
> I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!

And what sharper correspondence of despondency than that between Coleridge's

> All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—
> . . . . . .
> And I, the while, the sole unbusy thing,
> Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.

and Hopkins'

> See, banks and brakes
> Now leavèd how thick! lacèd they are again
> With fretty chervil, look, and fresh wind shakes

> Them; buds build—but not I build; no, but strain,
> Time's eunuch, and not breed one work that wakes.

Both were bereft of "the fine delight that fathers thought." If we can conjecture with some feeling of security that the opium of speculation unstrung Coleridge, surely we can with similar security suggest that the charges of religion put a resembling strain upon Hopkins. Like Coleridge, nobly honest in admission, Hopkins could not deny the testimony of his senses and the insistence of his conscience.

Though Wordsworth accompanied them in their plight, he followed an easier course. At his highest he was already finished. Even his best poems are mainly memories. Exhausting these, with comparatively little questioning, he succumbed more and more to orthodoxy and the conventional. But Hopkins, with a much more alert and merciless integrity, racked himself on the realization of the distance between his beliefs and the world as he experienced it. The ever-widening gap tore him apart. The very oneness he first knew now taught him a fierce feeling of separateness, aloneness. Desperately and futilely, we see, he endeavored to subdue his understanding to what he had believed and would still believe. Relentlessly his frustrations revenged themselves and harvested his rich despair. When he had succeeded finally in domesticating his senses, he found that God as the mystics claimed Him still did not come to him; nor did he longer joy in God's world. With the one he lost the other. With spirit and earth identical for him, as his first poems were joyous, so his last had to be agonized. In the first the vigors of spirit approved the earth; in the last the weight of the world compromised and crushed the spirit, one thoroughly weakened by an ascesis which in its fanaticism can also be lust.

Though he took what seemed the definitive step towards total acceptance and mysticism, he did not go with it; he could not. And he knew; so he was broken between his wish and his doubt, and his fear of his doubt. As I proposed earlier, his is the drama of modern man, ripped between two opposing positions, between past and future, superstition and knowledge, skepticism and learning. Others after him have suffered kindred fate. A Yeats with his resolute spurning of science as a dehumanizer; a Lawrence with his fitful flirting with psychology and then his denunciation of it for diluting the blood; and Eliot with his velleities for the past's permanence. The theme smacks of anti-intellectualism still. Hopkins could not turn his intellect away. Starting with religion, he saw it synonymous with the material world—as it is at its best, whether Plato or Christ. We, it seems, must work in reverse. Somehow returning from the straddle and the pull, we may at least envision the most basic Platonic ideal, the identity of earth and spirit. As long as they resent each other in us, we shall have neither, nor certainly peace from either.

MAUDE PHELPS HUTCHINS:

The Marriage of Toto

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

Suggested by an AP report that a female gorilla had been sold to Barnum and Bailey by Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt, "because she has grown tall and big and people around her were afraid." Barnum and Bailey expect to mate her with Gargantua, the Great, a notorious gorilla.

CHARACTERS

Toto . . . . . a young lady gorilla
Gargantua . . . . . a gorilla (550 pounds)
José . . . . . Toto's keeper
Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt . . . . . female explorer
200 spectators
3 policemen
A little girl

SCENE ONE: Sarasota, Florida. Friday.

Toto *(To herself, analytically. Pronounces "Cuba"—"Cooba," which has a sweet sound, very appealing):* I miss Cuba already. But it isn't Cuba that I really miss. Cuba is where I was last, just as I am here now. Everything is a sequence and it is sensible to remember where one has come from rather than be consumed with nostalgia for a place one can't remember.

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt: Toto!

Toto *(Continues to herself):* Much will be expected of me; I must try to think of the future. But have I a future? Has any gorilla a future? Cuba was a lovely place; don't I remember dark, warm looks? Thin, fast hands? I really do. I have never wanted to be anything else but a gorilla and that is why I am a success, it is true, neither have I wanted to be any other gorilla except myself—Toto—but the black eyes of Cubans were large and lucid and they had whites. What has happened that I have no whites to my eyes with a pretty pattern of silky veins like tiny rivers of blood? And love, what is love?

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt: Toto! Have you forgotten me? José, José! Doesn't she love me any more?

Toto *(Politely):* How do you do.

José: Chiquita, kiss the señora.

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt: She has grown. Good for you, Toto; you are enormous, simply huge.

200 Spectators: It's Toto.
It's Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt.
Hyer, Toots.
Hyer, Babe.

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt: Toto, darling. José, make her look at me. What is the matter with her?

José: Look, look, never mind, just look.

Toto: Cuba.

José *(To Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt):* She is homesick.

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt: For what?

José: She is just homesick.

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt: But she is mine. Didn't she miss me?

José: Yes, Señora.

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt *(Tries Spanish):* Chiquita.

Toto: Cooba.

200 Spectators: Speak to us, Toto.
Give us a few words.
What do you think of Florida?
Were you seasick?
A few words, Toto.
Ha, ha, ha.

Toto *(To herself):* What is love? What is expected of me?

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt: I can't wait to see her with Gargantua.

200 Spectators: Neither can we.
" " "
" " "
We can't wait.

José: Poor Toto.

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt: Send them all away until tomorrow.

José: Go away until tomorrow.

200 Spectators: It's a gyp.
Give me my money back.
We haven't seen Gargantua.
No fair.

José *(Quieting them):* Listen, listen: Toto is tired; Toto did not sleep all night. Insomnia is bad for gorillas. It exasperates gorillas. Look out for Toto if you add to her exasperation. Much is expected of Toto. Be kind to her. She is nervous.

200 Spectators: Ha, ha, ha.

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt *(With authority):* Go at once or you will not see Toto and Gargantua tomorrow.

They go. Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt also goes, throwing a kiss to Toto. José and Toto are alone.

José: It won't be so bad, Toto.

TOTO: Much is expected of me. I must pull myself together. At last I am alone with my José, but he tells me nothing. José, José, what is love?

JOSÉ: You need some rest, poor Toto, tomorrow will be a big day. Here is a banana, please eat it for José.

TOTO: What is Gargantua? José, José, what is Gargantua?

JOSÉ: I think she is worrying considerably about that big ape. She is so gentle, sweet Toto.

TOTO: I shall be as nice as I can; everyone has been so good to me.

JOSÉ: How do people know how a gorilla feels; what my Toto thinks? I am sure she understands me. But can I comfort her? Can I promise her happiness? I don't trust that big Gargantua. Listen, Toto, tomorrow you will no longer be alone. Perhaps tomorrow you will be happy. Toto, listen to José, don't cry.

TOTO: Why do I feel so sad all at once? Why am I afraid? What is going to happen?

JOSÉ: Toto, Toto, calm yourself. I want to tell you something. I must tell her; it would not be right not to. Toto, little one, listen to your José and stop crying. Don't cry, Toto.

TOTO: What is it? what is it? I am afraid. José, José. Help!

JOSÉ *(Stern):* Quiet, Toto.

TOTO *(Frantic):* Help. Help. Help, Help!

JOSÉ: Toto. Quiet! The Whip!

TOTO *(Sobs):* José beats me and I have done nothing.

JOSÉ *(More gentle):* I can't stay with you if you get so excited. Would you like some hot milk?

TOTO: Yes.

JOSÉ: Good.

TOTO *(A little hysterical):* Hot milk, hot milk, bananas, bananas, but no understanding. Even José doesn't understand. But how can he? Neither do I, neither do I. I feel overpowered. I feel a sick terror. I am shaking. I remember something but it has no shape. It is coming. Here it comes. I cannot breathe. Oh, help me, José. Ahh, it is gone.

JOSÉ *(Sad):* Poor creature, poor Toto.

TOTO *(Calm, sensible):* It is gone but it will come back. Thank you, José, for taking it away. The milk is good. Oh thank you, thank you, José, for everything.

JOSÉ: Now she is calm. Now is the time to tell her, but what is it I am to tell her? Look at her poise; look at her charm; how innocent she is; how almost benevolent and almost maternal; how tender and aloof: Toto . . . more milk? Nice hot milk, Toto, mine? Chiquita?

TOTO: No, thank you.

JOSÉ: Now is the time.

TOTO: I must prepare myself. I must think. But where is the subject matter?

JOSÉ: First I must remember my own apprehension. I must feel sorry for José; then I can help Toto. I remember very well, too well. I wish I could forget.

How all love fled, all freedom, and in its place responsibility. Much was expected of me; how I wanted to run; how I did run, in my mind, while my body . . . but this is not for Toto. There must be something else for Toto—so sweet, so gentle, so good. How awful everything is, caramba.

TOTO: Have a banana, José, here, have mine.

JOSÉ: See her offer me comfort, She is sorry for me.

TOTO: Everything will be all right.

JOSÉ: (1) Love, (2) apprehension, (3) shame, (4) pity, (5) loss of free will, that is the sequence. How can I talk of love to Toto who is a young girl? In the first place I am a man and in the second place she is a virgin. She is innocent; she is the kind who will always be innocent; her strong will will keep her mind always innocent; I foresee that and yet she is humble; she will seem to give in. While I, José, am not innocent, was never innocent; that is why I desire it so. I love Toto because she is innocent. I must not take her spirit in my arms; I must not tell her anything. But I want to! Toto, Toto, listen, listen, Toto, give me your attention, unbend your will. José will make you a woman with his tongue, listen!

TOTO: José is restless; he needs sleep. Quiet, José. José is beautiful, how beautiful he is. His skin is too smooth, he should not go without his shirt. (How smooth and yellow Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt is.) I am very fond of my José but his skin is disgusting, I love it, it is brown and slippery and really disgusting and appealing. José? Gargantua? Love? I must think. Will Gargantua be like José? Will he have whites to his eyes, slightly blue like José and skin like that . . . skin like José?

JOSÉ *(Confused):* I am crazy: But not so crazy that I will rape Toto's spirit with my crude words. I am ashamed that I have nearly done it. I hate my tongue, it is vile. Dear Jesu, I have harmed so many but this one I really love, I pray to Mary that I do not harm Toto. Amen.

JOSÉ *(Continues, tries hard to be helpful):* Tomorrow, Toto, you will have a life-long companion, perhaps a friend; you will have a protector, a playmate; someone who speaks your own language, understands you. He will take care of you in your old age, too, maybe, and you will share things together: sorrow and happiness, contentment, pleasure, even fear; when you are afraid it is possible that he, too, will be afraid and that will help.

TOTO: What is he talking about? He has a foolish, patronizing expression on his face which a while ago was so true, so real. I am very tired but I must not look bored. Maybe it is a story, it is quite long. Poor José.

JOSÉ: That is no good; I don't mean it and she knows it. We have had long talks before and she has understood; I cannot fool her. What will I do if she loves Gargantua? Caramba! *(swears)* I'll bash his stupid, ugly, son-of-a-bitch head in. Jesu, Mary, pardon. Toto?

TOTO: Yes, José.

JOSÉ: I will tell you the truth: love is terrible. Love is an act which is rational for the man but irrational, terrible, for the woman: to receive an act! that is crazy, indescribable, indistinct, without form, mad. For the woman it is

murder which she has not even committed; she is without subject matter, without object matter, without verb. That is terror. But don't, if you hate the man, your tormenter, your successor, any Name you want to call him, think that being a verb is without its terror, its madness. If you want him to suffer, be content, he does. He does not want what he wants, believe me, I am José of many loves, of many disappointments, much shame, much disgust. To be all action, that too is terrible. Love for the man is a false freedom, a pretense of freedom; he may choose his woman, it is true, and the delight and superiority of choosing so fools and pleases him that he does not see until it is over that his act is not of his choice but he only the instrument and he does not like to be used. He does not like to be merely the key which fits symbolically into the lock which in its turn metaphorically shuts the door on his freedom. Do not misunderstand me, woman, he loves your dependence, the trial you are to him, it is his lack of choice in action, his loss of free will, his responsibility of the act, *the* act, *the* responsibility that makes him feel like a dog with his paws held down, a baby tied in his crib. Pity him, pity *me,* José, who loves you, Toto; loves your spirit but in wanting it, wants *it,* even, in symbols. José is man, not a gorilla, but he cannot achieve an abstraction, he cannot love truly because he must think in images, intuition is imperfect in him, he must symbolically translate his love, must eat it, hold it, act. Forgive José, he is a mad verb and the instrument of symbols; without free will.

TOTO: José is telling me of life, responsibility, housekeeping, maternity. He is teaching me patience, pity, self-sacrifice. He is telling me to forgive, he is asking for my understanding, perseverance. I love him, I am special. He has chosen me. I am disgusting.

JOSÉ *(Firm, tries to say it with less emotion, better):* Listen, Toto. Tomorrow Gargantua will hold you in his arms. Tomorrow you and Gargantua will re-enact a play without words. You will together demonstrate an idea in order to prove to yourselves an abstraction. You will come close to reality, close to Idea, itself, in the true concentration you will both insist upon, but the imperfect symbolization of your act will leave you each discontented and no repetition will prove to either of you anything at all.

TOTO: Why is he scolding me? Is it because I have no whites; is there anything wrong with me? Am I not lovable? Am I evil? What are my plans; why am I a gorilla? Is it wrong? José, tell me a story, it is nearly morning.

JOSÉ: By Jesu, Toto, you will listen. But how can I tell her of the sorrow, the disgrace, the disappointment of love, the hatred, the lack of companionship between man and woman; the silences which in courtship are pregnant, sweet but in possession are barren, filled with regret, disgust, a time to plan the death of one's love, to think of cruelty, torment, sarcasm, expiation at most, the want to retract, get out of it, revenge oneself, regain one's self-respect, unity, oneness, to be lonely again? Poor José, poor Toto, chiquita.

TOTO: I am not sad, José, don't worry about me. Have some hot milk.

José and Toto eat crackers and milk while it is nearly morning.

SCENE TWO: Same Morning.

In a big glass cage sits tremendous Garantua on a little stool like a prize-fighter; his great hairy arms are draped over its sides exactly like a prize-fighter, too. He is vain and looks from side to side at the crowd and shows his teeth, two of which have been filled with gold; they shine. He also wears a handsome pair of horn-rimmed sun glasses; the crowd is delighted, they point. He takes the glasses off, spits on them, polishes them on his knee, replaces them. The crowd howls happily. He is without doubt the ugliest of all possible creatures and they can hardly contain themselves when, upon being handed a woman's pocket-book, he takes out a tiny mirror, removes his glasses, and peers at small parts of his great face in its shiny surface; finally he opens his mouth wide and stares at his tonsils. He is much more satisfactory than Toto, a real showman, a credit to his owners, to his tamer, to all gorillahood. What will Toto think?

There is a commotion; cries of "There she is," and Toto is gently pushed into the cage by José, who turns away, saying, "Think of something else, Toto." The crowd is suddenly still; the sun shines brightly; three policemen push through the crowd with Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt and her party; a couple of flash lights are taken of Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt; and all eyes are turned now upon the two animals.

TOTO *(Brings herself to look):* Oh, my God.

GARGANTUA *(Sullen; thinks here is a competitor for favor):* (nothing)

TOTO *(Critical):* He is beautiful but he lacks charm. Can this be Gargantua!

GARGANTUA: He isn't as big as me, or anything. What are they looking at him for?

TOTO: Why doesn't he take off his coat?

GARGANTUA: I didn't ask for company. Phooey.

TOTO: He has no skin. I prefer José although this Gargantua is disgusting in a different way. But he is not gentle, he is mean, selfish, despicable. Oh, I distrust him, I despise him. Look at his forehead, his ears, his long feet, he is beautiful but bad. He is a bad gorilla. I am lost. José, José! Help Toto!

GARGANTUA: Cripes, it's a female.

TOTO *(Wrings her hands):* José, José, I'll be good, I'll be quiet. José, José!

JOSÉ *(Appears; worried):* Stop it, Toto, he hasn't touched you.

TOTO: I have a headache, José; please, please let me out; I don't feel good. Take me back, José, back to Cuba.

GARGANTAU: Kewbar? What a goofy dame. Hi you, babe, this joint has it all over Kewbar. What's all the shootin' for?

TOTO: What a funny accent.

The crowd is getting restless; a few indecent remarks are passed.

MRS. KENNETH HOYT *(Feels responsible; stands apart and makes a megaphone of her hands):* Give them time. *(Then to Toto.)* Toto, see the Nice Big Husband.

200 SPECTATORS: Ha, ha, ha, ha.

MRS. KENNETH HOYT *(Indignant):* Don't laugh.

Gargantau is pleased at the laughter; takes no further notice of Toto; starts his tricks. But the spectators, beguiling as he is, are disappointed. They boo.

SPECTATORS: Booooooooooooo.

Gargantua looks worried; tries hard to amuse.

SPECTATORS: Booooooooooooo. Booooooooooooo.

GARGANTUA *(Suddenly jealous of the newcomer; in a rage):* That goofy dame. I'll kill her.

TOTO: Help, help, help help!

Gargantua rises with slow fury from his stool and starts toward his supposed rival. The spectators gasp.

SPECTATORS: Ahhhhh.

MRS. KENNETH HOYT *(Claps her hands):* Goody, goody.

JOSÉ: You're all right, Toto, take it easy.

Camera men set up their cameras. A child insists in a thin voice: What are the Teddy Bears DOING?

Gargantua swings his long arms like a windmill, first one way, then the other, lifts up his chin, opens his mouth wide and shuts it again, stops in the middle of the cage and jumps up and down in one place, and then with a scream, a long drawn screech, takes off his sun glasses and hurls them at the frightened Toto:

Goofy dame, goofy dame, get out of here!

The spectators, relieved from what was becoming a somewhat embarrassing suspense, giggle.

SPECTATORS: Hu - hu - g-g-g-igh. Heh, heh.

MRS. KENNETH HOYT: Naughty Gargantua, that isn't the way to please a lady. Be nice, Gargantua, be nice.

Toto in her fright presses herself to the glass, kisses it in supplication. Moans:

José, José, Toto will be good.

The spectators see Gargantua, shaken by his unsatisfactory act of fury, in the center of the cage turning his head from side to side, coughing like an old man, saying:

Ummpfh, garumpfh, rugpfh. Grmngtfsh. Achgftsh. Ggggg. Ssspff.

Recovering, he remembers his precious glasses; starts looking for them; spies them at Toto's feet; edges over, one arm protecting his head as if he feared a blow. This gesture charms half the spectators, makes up for their disappointment; they laugh.

HALF THE SPECTATORS: Ha, ha, ha.

Gargantua is happy: starts mugging; repeats the successful gesture; outdoes himself.

200 SPECTATORS: Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.
MRS. KENNETH HOYT: " " " " " " " " " " "
3 POLICEMEN: " " " " " " " " " " "
CAMERAMEN: " " " " " " " " " " "

Toto *(Can't be heard):* José, José.

José *(Kind) (Neither can he):* Come chiquita, never mind; poor Toto. It has been a big day. Do not be humiliated. It is not your fault.

He leads her away by the hand.

SCENE BEHIND THE SCENE: Toto. José. Enter Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt.

José: Toto is exhausted, I am giving her some hot milk.

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt: I am sorry for the poor thing. But wasn't it a scream. I nearly died laughing.

José: It is not really funny, excuse me, Señora, to Toto.

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt *(Peering at him curiously):* You seem to know what Toto thinks.

José: I sometimes know how she feels but no man can understand a woman.

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt: You amuse me.

José: (nothing)

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt: Come here, Toto.

José: Please, Señora, don't worry her.

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt *(Angry): I* worry her? She's mine, I brought her up.

José *(Placating her):* Si, Señora, Si, Si.

Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt *(Continues in the same tone):* From the time she was little. I fed her on a bottle; everything. When she got so big I was the only one who wasn't afraid of her. People thought it was remarkable that I wasn't afraid of her, but I had to sell her because other people were; you know all that, everybody does. I managed her by firmness, character. *Come* Toto, come this *instant,* come to Mother. *Come,* I say! *(She approaches Toto, who is eating her crackers and milk with a big wooden spoon.) Obey* me! *Toto!*

As Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt comes within reach of Toto, Toto sets down the bowl of milk, wraps a long arm around Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt and lifts her from the ground. Before José, who does not hurry, can reach her, Toto has broken the neck of Mrs. Kenneth Hoyt, who dies instantly, without having had time to change her expression which shows firmness, character. Not one hair is out of place; she might still be called one of the eight best dressed women.

Toto *(Picking up her bowl of milk):* Don't look angry at Toto, José. I know I have failed. Much was expected of me, but what is love, José? What is love? Cuba. I must think. José expected much of me, much, much, was expected of me. What shall I do? José, José.

JOHN FREDERICK NIMS:

Sunday

Morning of pleasant breakfast
All sun and rainbow funnies,
The gruen shed and dwindling,
The pendulum forgot.

By latin chart the preacher
Manoeuvres bell and candle,
Frowning, a mighty gambler,
Plays for the soul of god.

Outside (its splendid label
On tar and curbs a-tatter)
Broken, the drunkard's bottle
Shines like a jeweler's tray.

The world, an abbey window,
With light and action tingles,
Wild innocence, where lately
Riot and brothel hummed.

On streets where human grandeur
In knife, in condom shivered,
Laughing, the reckless Jesus
Crowds with his crazy love.

Hey Spinoza!

Bishop, mayor, and quarter-back,
Doctor, lawyer, merchant, quack—
What are your credentials, mac?

"Never mind. The code is sin,
Virtue, love. And now begin."
Wait—whose blueprint am I in?

Eat, think, labor, love, and sleep.
Five little hitlers my soul keep.
In the bonds I cuss and weep.

Honest Abe, who swore to see
Rastus and Jemima free,
Take a thoughtful look at me.

Love is shiny clockwork. Lo!
Gin and starlight make it go.
That's what every young man should know.

Though the heroes die for Spain
(Gesture of the lovely brain)
Human bondage will remain.

Hormones in their witches' cup
Stir a Great Emotion up.
Heroes sniff it like a pup.

Gland and psyche, bright as steel,
Clang and trap us. No appeal:
We in Prison Ego reel.

Letter

Dear blonde, my twelve-month folly, loved no more,
This letter to you from my extreme shore,
Very remote, yea, hell-and-gone; no place
Mined with the cartridge memory of your face.
Forgotten the nights of blanket-twisted bed,
The intense revolver cried-for at my head
(Mostly when drunk); the kisses bland with mint,
Stray hair and lipstick and such lover's-lint.

Rarely I now remember what you were:
Eyes morning-clear and buckwheat-colored hair;
A child and stormy, fragile, fond of scotch;
Bartender's friend or newsboy's, no one's much;
Empty of love as glassware; often cruel
Only as babies are that dribble gruel.

In dunes like red-cross linen, sterile of you,
Today I wander, straight and careless, who
There in the known terrains of shot desire
Should peer and falter yet, afraid of fire,
While any trace of park or tavern stand,
Groping uneasily in explosive land.

Race Riot

Dear city, listen: famous for tin bugs
That bred and rattled in the revelling twenties,
Beetles that gas, gin, sex, and whoopee quickened;

Dear city, shrine where that notorious tongue
Spat frenzy's gospel on the purchased air,
Hated the tragic race Jehovah cherished;

City where once the reeling legionnaires
In a dry time by thug and sourpuss haunted
Flocked for authentic brandy and right beer;

Dear city, listen: these we may forget,
But how your recent crime against the sun,
That colorist for houses of the soul?

Forget the running goons with blade and fist,
Or that rare plasm in the gutter wasted?—
Because our flesh (the messenger of love)
Wiser than any sieve to filter ill,
Wove for exotic noon a russet cover.

Dear city, listen: on the virulent reef
Our captains land in helmets bald as bone,
Hang like green foliage, burrow, rot for days
Watching the yellow death that creeps in jungles.

On isle or desert, from grey ship or train
Your help, Detroit, in guarded crate arrives.
But what can the tall soldier think, who flings
His life away for rhetoric of freedom—
What think to see your guns, your perfect planes
Crusted with outrage of American blood?

MEYER LIBEN:

The Caller

Formerly a sound sleeper, and sleeping regular hours, he began to wake up every morning at 4 a. m. He had tried the experiment, on a few evenings, of setting his alarm for 3:30, then waking and listening for a sound. But there was no sound between 3:30 and 4 a. m., and he was unable to understand what it was that woke him every morning at the same time.

He did not wake with a start, rather he found himself with his eyes open, speedily awake, looking out the window, and with a feeling of light-headedness which enabled him to see clearly the most indisputable and necessitous facts.

Mainly the death and disappearance of all most intimately connected with him, the inevitable death and disappearance seen clearly and with mounting sense of anxiety.

This early morning experience was the recurrence of a childhood experience of the same sort, where the sense of extinction involved the whole planet, and incidentally its inhabitants.

But now the planet remained, only certain individuals disappeared from it, off the face of it and under the ground of it. Moreover, where the child, visualizing total extinction, fell asleep shortly afterwards, now the young man, with a less apocalyptic, if more intimate view of disaster, was unable to fall asleep, but grew more awake, more and more light-headed, and more and more anxious.

Out of this state developed his relation to the telephone company. Wide awake and lonely, wide awake and anxious, he dialed for the correct time, and listened for minutes on end to the impersonal rhythms of that announcer.

Or dialed the Weather Exchange, and listened to the impersonal and unchanging pronouncements of that operator. She never varied her announcement, she never varied the tone of her voice, announcing alike storm, calm, and meteorological freaks.

He waited for a break in that voice, never with success, and took to questioning that voice, but never with success; merely the infuriating, evenly-timed announcements, and never a break in the voice, come question or demand, or the hoarse shrieking which he sometimes adopted.

If only because the time of the day changes, the voice of *that* announcer seemed more personal; if, from quarter minute to quarter minute, it could change its pronouncements, couldn't it also break out of that ring of time, and answer a simple query of his?

It could not, it never did, he was never able to detect a personal rise or fall in that voice, wheedle or scream as he would.

Apart from his loneliness and anxiety, he was overcome by a childhood feeling of the personal relation between the subscriber and the operator. "Hello

Central Hello." At that time young men were supposed to make dates with the operators.

But here was this impersonal voice, the wax voice, which defied all interruption to continue on its even course, this voice which told over and over the time of the day and the state of the weather.

With a sudden inspiration he dialed the Operator!

That personal voice asked him once, twice, what he wanted, but he was too surprised to answer, and further, wanted nothing but to talk to her.

"Is this the operator? Well, there is something wrong with my phone. Could you, do you think someone could come up to repair it?"

He made up the most fantastic pretexts to converse with that personal voice, and listened with the greatest interest to her technical retorts.

His requests were not unreasonable—neither in conversation with the Operator, nor with Long Distance, nor with Information, nor with the Repair Department (to which, on the above occasion, the operator referred him).

With Information he could carry on long conversations about the numbers of non-existent people such as dead or removed friends, at existent-enough addresses.

"Well," he'd say, "perhaps it's spelled with an *e*," or "I'm not quite sure what the initial is," and he'd wait for her reply, and then added information, changed spelling in an effort to capture forever that personal voice.

But that could not be. "Sorry, we have no such listing." And the same result with Long Distance, who hung up after giving him the rates to Chicago, San Francisco, and Detroit.

All this was better than the impersonality of the Weather and the Time, but by no means satisfying, for he was never able to depart from the business at hand—the least attempt at a remark apart from the business at hand left him with a dead receiver after a curt "Sorry, sir," or a dead receiver with nothing said at all.

This was far from the "Hello Central Hello" of his childhood, and returning to bed, wide-awake, he could only gaze at the night breaking up, and as the grey light spread out, he was able to fall asleep, exhausted, for the few hours before his working day started.

Only to begin again the following a. m., or the one after (for occasionally he slept through like a log, slept past his waking hour) to face that clear recognition of intimate doom. This was unbearable, so he went to the phone.

He was through with the official calls, and dialed a stray number. A sleepy irritated voice answered. The caller listened and apologized, then listened to the abuse which followed the apology.

Or he dialed and an anxious, pain-stricken, wide-awake voice answered; the caller hung up quietly.

Or a business-like voice answered, giving the name of the firm, asking him to state his business. He almost became involved in a commercial transaction, though the product was unfamiliar to him.

One morning he dialed a sympathetic voice, a voice almost the echo of his

own. Here he detected the same sleeplessness, the same anxiety.

"Yes, yes," said that voice, "I simply cannot sleep, I am filled with foreboding. I see very clearly the end of all my dear ones, there is nothing I can do to stop this. But when I begin working, I transfer this anxiety to my tasks, and am therefore known as the most conscientious worker in my shop.

"But this anxiety, spread over these trivial tasks, takes revenge on me by awakening me every morning and forcing me to face the anxiety. Confronted with this burden, I am lost, I can only stare out and await my release with the beginning of the working day."

And the voice proceeded to disclose in detail tribulations and methods of escape, and to delineate, in the sharpest manner, the mood of anxiety and yearning.

It was only later in the day, and with a sinking feeling, that our friend realized that he did not know the name, or more important, the number of that voice.

Such an oversight! He was planning to communicate nightly with that voice. He tried to remember the number, that was impossible. He scribbled a few numbers down, and that morning he dialed them, unsuccessfully.

One number was no number at all, and another number brought on a little girl's voice, which babbled incoherently and endlessly.

So he lost that sympathetic, echo voice, and was never able to find it again.

But he jumped from his bed a few nights later, tripped all over himself, and reached the ringing telephone on the fourth ring. It was about 3:30 in the morning, the only time he was ever awakened at such an hour by the telephone.

"Dr. Jones, you must come over immediately. Frank has had another attack."

He interrupted the party to tell her that this was the wrong number.

What a let-down, after being sure that this was the sympathetic voice, that the voice had somehow tracked him down, eager to continue the conversation which had started so auspiciously.

Then he began to call acquaintances and friends. This was a risky business. Generally he'd sit there and say nothing, listening to the familiar voice. In this way, distracted as he was, he learned a good deal. Some of his friends grew frantic as they asked for the identity of the caller and got no reply. Others cursed, a few hung up without a word. In general, they behaved no differently than they did in the normal social intercourse.

But on some occasions, simply to draw out conversation, he disguised his voice, gave the effect of having a wrong number, etc., and listened with some interest to the reaction on the other side. At least this was something to do, it kept him away from the bed and from the slowly approaching dawn; when the light begin to spread, he felt most uneasy.

One call, however, almost cost him his anonymity—he so far forgot himself as to use a typical expression, and the very use of that expression had the effect of bringing his voice back to its natural tone. There was a short pause, then the friend said:

"Who is that?"

The caller gave a fictitious name.

"Who is that?" asked the friend again. "Is it . . . ?" and he mentioned the caller's name.

The latter was panic-stricken and cut off the call immediately afterwards. When the two met a few nights later, the friend looked at him with a curious expression, started to ask a question, but decided against it.

One evening, at about seven o'clock, our caller was leaving his little apartment. There was a knock on the door, and an elderly man entered.

"I am a representative of the telephone company," he said, and flashed a card with a mounted picture which could have been a representation of the Duke of York, so panic-stricken did our friend become at the sight of this stranger.

"I've tried to get you a couple of times," said the stranger, "but haven't had much luck."

"Is it the bill?" asked our friend, putting on a bold face and making for the door. "I'll take care of that tomorrow."

"I'll walk over to your office during lunch hour," he added.

"It's not the bill," said the stranger.

"Not the bill," repeated our friend, in a tone which indicated the utter impossibility of anyone coming to see him on business unconnected with the paying of an overdue telephone bill.

"It's not the bill," said the stranger, looking around the room (his eyes settled on the telephone). "It's something else."

"In that case," said our friend, foolishly, "I'll be going along."

"Look," said the stranger, "we've been getting some complaints about you, and I'm here to check on them. Are you in the habit of using your phone in the early hours of the morning?"

"What do you mean by the early hours of the morning?" asked our friend, in a question which began on a tone of shrewdness and ended up in a barely suppressed fit of hysterical laughter.

"By early hours of the morning," said the stranger, "I mean the hours between four and six."

"What a crazy thing," said our friend. "The only time I use the phone at those hours is when I'm planning a hike for Sunday morning and might phone Weather in order to find out if the weather conditions are favorable."

"So you're an outdoor man," said the stranger, and his eyes, roaming the room, seemed to be looking for some tangible evidence of outdoor life, such as a knapsack or a pair of snow-shoes. Obviously disappointed in his search, he went on:

"Just the Weather, eh?"

"Oh, and the Time also," said our friend, "if my watch has stopped and I've got to make a train."

"The Time, the Weather," mused the stranger, and he began to shuffle through some papers. "Well, that part is all right, but how come you make

telephone calls to all kinds of strangers at all kinds of hours?"

He said this without looking up from his papers, a kind of lightning thrust which was supposed to unbalance the suspect.

"What do you mean by all kinds of strangers?" asked our friend, too much off balance to be disturbed by such a thrust.

"By all kinds of strangers," replied the investigator, "I mean all kinds of people that you don't know and that you have no business calling at any time, much less five o'clock in the morning. By all kinds of strangers I mean the following."

And he proceeded to detail, with dates, and sometimes the subjects of conversation, a list of names.

As our friend listened to this long recital, he suddenly remembered that sympathetic voice, and waited for a clue that might enable him to track down that voice.

The investigator came to the end. There was a pause.

"Look," said our friend, somewhat excitedly, "there was one man, I mean he understood this whole business perfectly, he was not the kind of man to complain, but still, it's possible, it was a local call . . . "

His voice trailed off.

The investigator looked at him coldly.

"Do you think I'm going to act as a spy for you? You have admitted your guilt. You are definitely a nuisance."

(As he said this, he looked exactly the part of a minor field functionary in the Public Nuisance branch of the Psycho-Neurotic division of a giant utility corporation.)

Our friend seized the agent by the arm. "Do you sleep well at night? How do you do it?" he asked.

"From the time that I was eighteen years old," said the investigator, "I have gone to bed every night at eleven o'clock, and woke up every following morning at seven o'clock (that includes Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) and furthermore, have slept like a log for those eight hours, and woke up refreshed!"

"Dreams," he said, "rarely disturb me."

"You mean," inquired our friend, "that you never get up about four in the morning and feel anxious, even a little responsible?"

"Look," said the agent, "my responsibility ends when my day's work is done (*you* must own your own business) and I don't have much time to be anxious; and if I were anxious, I would never get up at four in the morning to prove it.

"My advice to you," went on the agent, "is to go home, forget about it and then go about your business without losing any sleep over it."

He chuckled at his joke.

"How?" asked our friend, like a fool.

The agent looked irritated.

"I am going to help you gain mastery over yourself," he said.

He moved swiftly to the door and opened it. A lanky repair man entered. He gave the agent a knowing look; the latter nodded.

Without a word, the repair man went over to the telephone, started to unscrew the box from the wall.

"Here," cried our friend, "you can't do that."

He rushed to a spot between the repair man and the box. The repair man shrugged his shoulders and waited.

"Can't I?" inquired the agent, and he flourished a document, waved it about.

"This," he said, "is an order, which gives me the right to remove this telephone."

He did not specify whether it was a court order, or a company order, but our friend stepped back at this sudden show of authority. The repair man stepped forward to continue his work.

"Don't take it so hard," reasoned the victorious old agent. "This is the best thing that could have happened to you. Now you'll get up at your crazy hour and go back to sleep again, for lack of anything to do."

"Suppose," asked our friend, "I decide to go out to the railroad terminal around the corner and call from there?"

"You won't do that," said the company man, "you won't have the energy. Furthermore, the activity will lose all its charm in a public place.

"But should you try it," he went on severely, "you won't get off so easy. We'll be watching you."

"They'll hound you," said the repair man, casually, going on with his work.

Our friend turned to this possible ally in some excitement.

"You must find this type of work very distasteful," he said.

"I'm a technician," replied the repair man. "I disassociate myself from the intent of the job."

This answer was a disappointment to our friend, who nevertheless persisted.

"You are trying to be neutral," he said, "but you don't always succeed. Nor would it be any credit to you if you achieved such a disassociation from your job."

"I keep my ideas to myself," said the repair man, but the tempo of his work increased.

"This is getting very tiresome," said the veteran agent. "It's a peculiar thing," he went on, turning to our friend, "but we get into such a discussion every time we're out on a case of this sort."

Our friend felt humiliated at being included in a *category*.

The telephone rang. The repair man pulled the box from the wall, the ring was cut off.

"What's the idea?" cried our friend. "You cut off a call."

"You are no longer a subscriber," said the agent, rather grimly. "You are no longer entitled to incoming calls."

He shook hands with the ex-subscriber, and then, in a stray gesture, with the repair man. The latter scooped up the telephone directories.

Without a telephone, without telephone directories, without the agent and the repair man, our friend was really cut off.

He walked to the window and vacantly watched the agent and repair man get into a car and drive away.

"Tomorrow I'll move," he decided. "I'll change my name and subscribe again."

JOHN FRANCIS PUTNAM:

Recreation Park, Asheville, N. C.

The easy girls at twilight, self-contained,
Provocatively sheathed with implication,
Have resentful and appraising eyes,
And mouths that, swollen red
And exquisite with promise,
Show as latent wounds upon this evening's sanctity.
Here from the braggart streets and inconsistent
City lives, they spread their picnic litter on the grass,
Assume the languid "Screenland" pose
While a late gold is washing out upon the postcard hills.

This is the hour of the usual magic, the people's
Endowment at evening, when lights on the
Merry-go-round are a neat, grinning pattern
Of seed pearls. The hydraulic prance of the
Horses is frozen in rococo frenzy, the heads
Flourished high, but obedient: they are away to the limited wars,
And serene in the plunging, the slow lunging throng,
A red and gold sleigh for the young and the timid
Is gliding, negating centrifugal law.
From the skating pavilion the manikin throng,
Leaning on the turns, and swaying in the effortless stance
Of a dream promenade, drowns the loudspeaker music
Of love and deceit in a generous roar.
And over the hooting calliope din,
Motor boats drone on the lake.
Here the ambulent longings of victimized lives
Are fulfilled in a resolute fraud:
Enchantment, with crackerjack prizes for all.

V. ILYENKOV:

Fire

Translated by Elena Zarudnaya

On the day when the first snowflakes whirled in the sky, the Losevs moved from their lopsided hut into the new house. Resin drops hung on the yellowish logs, and the whole house was filled with the strong, cheerful smell of a pine forest at noon. Outside the black windows the wind whistled and the birch tree creaked, but in the house the stove was burning hotly, and Grandpa Philip, sitting by the fire with his grandchildren, was saying:

"See how the fire plays—just like a little beast, jumping from branch to branch! Just waiting for a chance to get out of his cage! And if he only gets that chance, he'll rush out, open his mouth, and swallow the whole village in one moment . . . "

The children looked at the fire eagerly, and saw the shaggy paws clutching the log, and the bushy tail, reddish and smoky, like a squirrel's. They listened to that little beast noisily crunching the wood, and tried to imagine him swallowing the village.

"But she will choke," said Olgushka, the youngest, thinking of the kitten that choked on a fish-bone.

"No, dear, he won't choke . . . He's the fiercest beast!" Grandpa threw a log into the fire and said sternly: "Don't you ask for more, you won't get any!"

Efim was nailing a horseshoe to the threshold so that good luck would never leave his new home. Antonina was mixing dough, submerging her arms in the batter up to her elbows. The cricket, whom Nadya—the oldest grandchild—brought from the old hut, was singing. It was just what everybody wanted: warm, quiet, cosy.

True, the war was on somewhere, but it seemed remote. They did talk about the war, even on this evening of family well-being, but always returned to the subject that was more important for them that day.

"God save us from being in the trenches in such a frost," Efim said. "We're warm here, aren't we?"

"I should say! As warm as a bath house," glowed Grandpa who valued warmth more than anybody else.

He shut the stove, and through the damper screen the children saw for the last time how the little red beast tossed and shrieked, shut up in his cage.

Suddenly there was a queer rumbling outside, and immediately the house shook so hard that sand poured from the ceiling; the hanging lamp swung, and the clock stopped. Efim ran into the hall, and there, in the dark, saw a white light bursting through the cracks. He threw open the door to the porch. A strange moon was hanging over the village, and its piercing light made even the windmill, a verst away, clearly visible. This moon was slowly descending

and melting, dropping big burning drops which went out before reaching the earth. And, as if from these fire-drops, the roof of the house next door suddenly burst into flame.

"Fire!" Efim screamed and rushed into the house.

Another thump was heard, and the window-panes fell out, with a crush. Efim was thrown to the floor. The lamp went out, and windows were filled with the red light of the fire. The children were screaming. Efim crawled toward their scream, grabbed something soft and warm, and carried it muttering:

"Don't be scared, Olgushka, don't be scared, girlie . . . "

The street was brightly lit, and a woman was running between two rows of the burning houses, her hair down, carrying a pail on a yoke, and crying:

"Ni-ura! Ni-ura!"

"Why does she yell hurrah? And why the pails?" Efim wondered, and noticed just then that she had a sheepskin in her hands. And then, himself screaming "Olgushka! Olgushka!" he ran into the house—feeling, rather than seeing, that its new straw roof was burning too.

The dawn found the Losevs on the naked frozen earth. Antonina was wrapping Olgushka in her blouse. Her arms were covered with dough up to her elbows. Efim was digging into the ashes with a stick, looking for something. Grandpa Philip sat in his coat stretching his blue hands over the coals.

Only smoked-up chimneys and stoves were left of the village—the only fireproof parts of the houses—and these stoves, wide, spotted with soot, with the long roan necks of the chimneys, seemed like antediluvian monsters. The whole flock of these monsters was lying among the crooked black trees, and their stinking breath rose to the sky. The snow was falling, as if trying to cover up human sorrow, but the snowflakes melted on touching the burnt logs, and the black ashes amid the brightness of the first snow spoke even louder of the human misery.

"Well, we used to live like people, now we'll try to live like sheep." Grandpa Philip said with a grim smile, and patted Efim, who stood in a torpor, on the shoulder. "We have to dig a mudhouse. It will be warmer, anyway."

He found a piece of an old iron spade and began to dig a hole in the place where the new house had stood yesterday—the earth in this spot was warmed through deeply and was soft as in summer. They lined the hole with straw from the field, and hid the children in it, and while Grandpa and Efim were putting together a few cracked bricks for a stove inside the hole, Antonina started the fire in the big stove to cook some dinner. The smoke came from the roan chimney, and it was queer to see this stove meaninglessly heating the cold enormous world.

In a few days the troops came through the village, and Efim left with them to have his revenge on those that had burnt his house. The family stayed in the hole. Antonina was laid up with fever.

"You'll perish here," Efim said desperately, taking his leave.

"We'll have to manage somehow," Grandpa replied. "Look at this mag-

pie here, he's poorer than we are, but he manages."

Efim looked at the magpie chattering gayly on the blackened birch tree, and started to cry—the magpie somehow resembled his dear Olgushka.

A little while later the Germans came. They yelled something, and Grandpa kept repeating:

"There's nothing you can take from us, we're just about naked . . . We live in the earth, your excellency."

A German in a summer sweater took Grandpa's coat, leaving him in his jacket, and yelled something which in Russian meant "get out." The Germans pulled Antonina and the children out of the hole.

"Hau ab! Hau ab!" they yelled, pointing to the forest which darkened in the distance.

Grandpa led the children to the forest, holding them by the hand, and Antonina followed them, stopping to rest every ten steps. They reached the forest toward evening. Philip pulled out an axe from under his jacket and winked gayly to the children:

"We've cheated the German! That's his hup-hup!" He imitated the German, and the children laughed.

Grandpa found an old bear's lair under a huge uprooted pine, cut up some pine branches, covered the bottom, and the children and mother crept into the lair, which smelt of dogs and moss.

"Now, little bears, press close to your mother, you'll both be warmer," Grandpa said, and went to search for fire.

He found a dry birch-log, sharpened a stick, and started to rub a log with the stick. It was already dark, but Grandpa kept working, never stopping for a minute. And suddenly. in the dark, a spark flashed under the palms of his hands. Philip blew on the fire carefully, repeating caressingly:

"Eat, fellow, eat! Pick up strength!"

The fire strengthened, became livelier, pulled out its mischievous little tongue, licked the leaves, clutched with its little paws a brown branch, stuck to it, and gave out a savory juniper smoke. And the people, driven out of their mudhouses into the forest, were drawn to this fire. Only a minute ago they had thought that life was over, that there was nothing left but death. But now they saw the fire timidly lighting up the deep forest, and they moved on to it, half-dressed, stoop-shouldered, and blackened. They sat around the blazing fire and listened to Grandpa's stories.

"And so God decided to chase Adam from Paradise. And so he tells him: You can take along whatever you wish from the wealth of my Paradise. And around there are heaps of silver, gold, diamonds, clothes, shoes, anything. And Eve tells Adam: Take more gold. But he, Adam, took just a little live coal. And God tells him: You're a queer one, Adam, not to take any gold or silver, but just this live coal. And Adam tells Him: With this little fire I won't perish, I shall build myself another Paradise."

Grandpa laughed, and everybody smiled, and started talking, approving of Adam, and disapproving of Eve. The fire blazed, and the darkness receded, surrendering to the force of the fire.

WALLACE FOWLIE:

Eliot and Tchelitchew

I. FOUR QUARTETS

Since the time of the medieval poems on the Holy Grail legend and the Divine Comedy, the major works of literature have dealt more exclusively with the tragedy of love than with the quest for love. But in his *Four Quartets* Mr. Eliot has composed a poem unlike the work of his contemporary peers, in that his unnamed hero (who is, of course, on one level of interpretation the poet himself) is the quester, a modern Parsifal traversing the dangers and the dryness of the world in his search for the grail castle. In accordance with the modern tradition, the hero of *Four Quartets* is a diminished personality comparable to the clown of the painters and Prufrock of Eliot's earlier poem. Like Emily Dickinson, he is saying throughout the pages, "I'm nobody! Who are you?" and like Rilke in *Das Lied der Waise,* "Ich bin niemand und werde auch niemand sein." He is the undeveloped and the undifferentiated one, the clown who performs best before a public of children, as uncharacterized and as unportrayed as the hero in *Une Saison en Enfer.*

Burnt Norton, first of the *Quartets,* is the poem of the rose garden. It is the first world of the children, not the world we actually lived in, but the mythic world constructed by our child's imagination, the perfect rose garden of the fairy stories and the great legends of the children of men. *Burnt Norton* evokes the gardens of the medieval romances as well as "tous les paysages possibles" of Rimbaud. The child's moment is the exhausting of time and age: the moment when one is all characters, all sexes, all ages—the prodigiously unreal moment when we bear most of reality. Everything is unseen and unheard in childhood. And yet it is the moment when we see and hear the most, when we see the blooms of the rose garden we never entered and hear the birds that sing there.

The second quartet, *East Coker,* is the poem of growing old. It represents therefore an opposing movement to *Burnt Norton,* which described the static moment of childhood in which we grow wondrously. *East Coker* is the literal growth and decay, the cycle of the family and of human ugliness. After the first quartet with its strong theme relating the triumph of imagination, the second quartet resounds with the eternally imminent danger of emotion. After leaving the world's garden of our childhood, we enter the earth's hospital of our maturity.

The last two quartets are religious interpretations of the first two: *The Dry Salvages,* the third quartet, interprets *East Coker,* the second, and *Little Gidding,* the fourth, interprets *Burnt Norton,* the first. The real world and its principle of growth and change are first interpreted, in *The Dry Salvages,* by the image of the sea, symbol of timelessness, and the symbol of the bone on the beach, image of man's fate in time. The strange drama of human flesh becomes

comprehensible to Eliot only in terms of the "calamitous annunciation" of man's fall and that other Annunciation of the Redeemer's birth. The destructive element of time and the wasting of human flesh are offset by the prayer of the Lady on the promontory and the doctrine of the Incarnation. The timeless explains the timed, as the spirit explains the body, as the sea explains the river, as the Annunciation explains the Incarnation.

In the final quartet, *Little Gidding,* the springtime of *Burnt Norton* has become midwinter spring and the rose garden has become a secluded chapel. The roseate imagined world of the child has become England in the early 1940's darkened by the menaces and the knowledge of war. To the doctrines of the Annunciation and the Incarnation succeeds the doctrine on Love: the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of Pentacostal fires. The language of the dead is superior to the language of the living. It is tongued with fire and communicates to the timed from the timeless. From the Heraclitean sentences on the death of air and earth, and of water and fire, to the allusions concerning air warden patrols in England,—from the Pentacostal fire to the flickering tongues of the Messerschmitts, a tremendous span in time is effaced.

The evolution of Mr. Eliot's work parallels the cycle of the *Divine Comedy. The Waste Land,* with its persistent theme of dryness and sterility, its interrupted dramatic episodes on frustration, its nightmarish and static quality, is the *Inferno* where the modern world is seized by its own guilt and transfixed by its own conscience. In this first major poem by Eliot, time is held within itself as though it could never be redeemed. The movements in it, as in Dante's *Inferno,* are not progressive, they are endless repetitions, and their visions are the dry lanscapes already seen. *Ash Wednesday* marks the transition from the first period of Eliot's poetry to the most recent volume, as *Purgatory* involves on the one hand the total understanding and memory of sin, and on the other hand the promise that with sin's acknowledgment and repentance the end of its realm will be reached. *Four Quartets* are not in any literal sense a poem on Paradise, but they bring the spirit of man, the modern man who has made the absolute turning of *Ash Wednesday,* to the very frontier of the third realm where the suffering of indifference and ignorance *(The Waste Land)* and the suffering of spiritual knowledge *(Ash Wednesday)* are converted into the suffering of love *(Four Quartets).*

II. CHILDREN IN THE TREE

The rose bush and the yew tree are constantly recurring symbols in Mr. Eliot's work, used to designate time and eternity. The leaves of the shrubbery, mentioned in the opening lines of *Four Quartets,* and the apple tree growing in the same garden, referred to in the final lines of the work, form a major theme in the elaborate musical construction. The tree moves in its leaves as the entire sky seems to move in the drift of its stars, but one is the movement of time, exhausting itself and recommencing, and the other is the movement of eternity, absolute in itself, conquered and conquering. As in Mallarmé's remarkable sonnet, *M'Introduire dans ton histoire* (drawn upon heavily by Mr. Eliot in

Burnt Norton, part II), there is a strong relation in *Four Quartets* between the human timed drama taking place on the earth, "un gazon de territoire" and the timeless omnipresent Divine Love flashed across the heavens like the permanent sun.

Perhaps more than a relation between the cycle of human life: its birth, fulfilment, and death—and the never exhausted, never changing energy of Divine Love—, there exists an intersecting or a collision when, on one level, the bread becomes the Real Presence, and on another level, when man, while remaining held in time, transcends it in his sudden apprehension of Love, and when, on still another level, God or His spirit of timelessness and excessive Love, enters a body He created for His own reception. This drama of collision which permits man to comprehend, bear, and transcend the great principle of flux in which he lives, is the drama of *Four Quartets.* The hero is the quester, the searcher for that moment in time which is timeless and always, the visionary of all the possible landscapes, the prototype of Parsifal whose vision of the grail is the prepared and explicit moment of his salvation. And like Parsifal, the quester in *Four Quartets* relies upon the children in the tree for direction.

The purity of the children's voices can be apprehended only by the pure in heart. Verlaine, in his sonnet on *Parsifal,* breaks off the narration of grail ceremonial at the precise moment of elevation, as in the mass, and with his fourteenth line, "Et ô ces voix d'enfants chantant dans la coupole'" (used in *The Waste Land*), translates the moment of religious ecstasy by evoking the purity of boys' voices. In the Holy Grail legend, Parsifal is guided to the grail castle by the voices of children in the tree (as Siegfried followed the voice of a bird), and in these new poems by T. S. Eliot, the poet is guided by the voices of children and birds hidden in the shrubbery and rose bushes of a child's garden *(Burnt Norton)* to the secluded chapel of his mature faith *(Little Gidding).*

The symbol of the tree is all-important, whether it be the rose, testifying to carnal love in the child's first sexual experience and hence to the principle of change and decay, or whether it be the yew tree, which like the grail castle and the Anglican shrine of Little Gidding, testifies to the permanency of Divine Love. In the medieval tradition the tree can easily be explained on the four levels of interpretation: first, as the literal tree in the setting of Eliot's rose garden; second, as the allegorical tree of the Crucifixion from the top of which the Voice speaks and directs; third, as the tropological tree whose life cycle is the moral divisioning of time; and fourth, as the anagogical tree when, suddenly, at the end of the final poem, it is called the apple tree and alludes, as does the spitting out of the apple seed in *Ash Wednesday,* to the spiritual drama of man's fall and redemption. As the tree in the First Garden was the gauge or barometer of man's obedience and love, so the tree in Eliot's poems is the symbol of time and eternity which are the two aspects of man's personal drama.

At the beginning of *Burnt Norton,* we read that "the leaves were full of children" and at the end of *Little Gidding* we read that "the children in the apple tree" were "not known, because not looked for." The tree of Eden is at the source of the world, and the children who inhabit it are those beings

possessed by that immediate kind of love which is innocency, by the deep intuition which accompanies original love and permits a breathless lucidity concerning the purpose and the actions of man. The children in the Parsifal story know the way to the grail castle because they are pure, and the children in Eliot's poems are still waiting for the modern quester to recover sufficient innocency to ask for the way. In Pavel Tchelitchew's painting *Cache-Cache,* completed in 1942 and now exhibited in the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the same subject reappears invested with a dramatic anguish which illumines the entire theme of the children in the tree.

Childhood is that period when man's mission of fidelity is easy and natural to accomplish. And since the tree of knowledge is the eternalized symbol of God's fidelity to man, there exists an intimate relation between the child and the tree. The child understands the tree without needing to understand the knowledge of the tree. As the vegetable and the mineral do not dissimulate any one of the elements of which they are composed, so the child has no need of hiding its life which is one with that of the tree. Tchelitchew's genius has fused the faces of hundreds of children with the leaves and the flowers. *Cache-Cache* is a vast painting of metamorphosis and symbolism, comparable in its complexity to *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake.* Two opposing principles are at work everywhere on the canvas: first, the process by which nature imitates the coarseness or at least the terror of man in the resemblance between the tree (its trunk, roots, and branches) and the bones and nails of some monstrous hand; and second, the process by which the children, who represent the human species, are being transformed into the tree and therefore into a non-human species. The tree and the child are both being transformed simultaneously and to the same degree, and they are both undergoing a simultaneous torture and liberation.

As in the dawns of the earliest days of the world, the children in *Cache-Cache* are rushing toward one another, blindly, the same blood in their veins animating them, the same desperate love and fate joining them. Liturgical colors mark the children's encirclement of the seasons. A testitcle and a foetus indicate, at the bottom of the tree, the male and female origin of life, and, at the top, wheat and an apple symbolize the apex and fruition of life. The figure of the little girl in the center of the picture, pressing her face against the trunk and counting out the seconds in the game of *Hide and Seek,* is the hero, a kind of Hamlet gone child. She and the small boy to her right appear to be fornicating with the tree rather than with themselves in their sprawled attitude which is an effort to lose themselves in nature. Tchelitchew's children in the tree, Parsifal lost in the dry places of the world, Hamlet in his father's castle, and the poet Eliot in his memory of the rose garden and in the reality of Little Gidding are all seeking to identify themselves. But self-identification and self-annihilation are regions extraordinarily close one to the other. As there is no interval between day and night, there is no intermediary hope or risk between the hope of salvation and the risk of destruction.

Thus, in the children, meet the two worlds of hope and fear, of knowledge

and ignorance, of success and failure. A little girl in *Cache-Cache* is blindfolded, but no more so than Hamlet, and the children in the poem are unknown because unseen. Tchelitchew and Eliot have both composed works which are simultaneously a cycle and a drama. Their memory of pure childhood provides the cycle, and their memory of the agonized search for the world in childhood and the subsequent desperate search for the child in adulthood provide the drama. Both the poet and the painter have been guided by the children, and in each case the artist is depicted against the background of the awful lucidity of children. The inner landscapes of the children, which are their dream and their horror, are recast by the artist who, alone in the society of men, remains the child in his power of metamorphosis and symbolism.

OSCAR WILLIAMS:

Fable for Next Time

The Dragon of Justice wore his scales on his stomach
And parted the grasses with a fine comb's distraction;
He was practically an endless pipeline of action,
His breath, swords of whirlwind, whistling and chemic.

Not so impetuous, however, he couldn't stop babbling
At seeing a child sleep in the clothes of its parents;
At first he nibbled the moulding from the inheritance,
Not far from the blue in the eyes of the Babeling.

O subtly he sipped the innocence from the forehead
Till the eyes grew dark and the will refractory;
The child left its clothes and tripped to the factory
And let out a music both murderous and worried.

The Dragon of Justice then danced on the landscape,
Every part of him danced; the flowerfields withered,
The Cathedral of Angers drooped in such weather,
The world's leaves reared at the sound of brimstone.

The child soon got onto the dragon in the starlight,
Threw its thought in the scales and time went flying;
It was only sleepwalking when it caught itself dying
For it woke up the grown-up and its eyes were scarlet.

OSCAR TARCOV:

A Visit

Certainly unexpected, but a very exciting evening.

I sat at the table with the Duggans, being cautious with the amount of steak I took and the number of potatoes. I expressed my pleasure at their choice of wine and kept in mind the Duggan's poverty as a restraint to my appetite. They were nice people; poor people, but they were people without self-pity. My help would be refused in the kitchen and I would retire to the living-room with Mr. Duggan and we would have a warm talk about what existed in the world. Later in the evening Mrs. Duggan would come in and the conversation would shift to include her serious interests.

Excellent people the Duggans, tolerant, but with a static interest and response to the universe. The depression had seeped into their bones and eye muscles and had left them without zest and without outgoing love, but had not injured their basic tenderness and hospitality toward their friends.

But unexpectedly it was an exciting evening. Their little son Bob, bright-eyed and talkative young man of six, dashed into the house and said that Richard was going to make a parachute for him if he could get some cloth. I liked the way Mrs. Duggan agreed. She was tired and having her well-earned rest in a soft chair, but little Bob had to play and he needed cloth for a parachute. As she searched in a closet and brought out old rags she told me about Richard, an offspring of a Polish young lady and a Filipino. Richard was eight and amazingly self-reliant. He would ask for six cents from his mother and with her knowledge he would take a street-car to the end of the line, walk around the neighborhood, and then board another street-car for home. He would spend entire days this way. Once he went to the big railroad station, wanting to watch the people and the trains; and he was picked up by a truant officer, for it was during the day and he had played hookey from school. Richard gave the truant officer his telephone number. The officer phoned the mother and she said just put him on the street-car, he would come home.

Mrs. Duggan told me that Richard was a handsome child. And she told me that his mother would give him, for example, ten dollars to go to the store for groceries. Richard could be trusted; trusted not to spend the money for his own pleasures and trusted to know the right change and bring it home. A little silent man, Mrs. Duggan called him, but still a playful, energetic child.

I wanted to see him and asked Mrs. Duggan to have Bob bring him in the house.

Richard was beautiful; tattered, dirty pants, and his body dark and made darker by dirt and play. But his eyes were fiery and his slim body (he wore no shirt) was erect and alert, jungle-alert. He walked into the house with ease but restraint. He did not look at me or Mr. Duggan. He seemed to be led to

Mrs. Duggan's voice (she knew how to love children); she was asking him what kind of cloth would be best for the parachute. With few words, and mainly nods of his head, Richard indicated his approval and disapproval of bits of cloth. He watched Mrs. Duggan carefully, not her face but her hands, as she snipped a scissors around a ragged piece of cloth that he had chosen for the parachute. He was silently critical but it was obvious that he respected Mrs. Duggan's work; that was the way he would do it himself.

When Mrs. Duggan gave Richard the mended cloth she asked him if it was all right. There was a bit of nervousness in the boy, for he sucked in one corner of his lip as he took the cloth. He could make a parachute from it, he said.

I was stimulated by the thought of Richard and little Bob playing in the back yard. I suggested that we sit on the back porch and watch the children play. It wasn't a porch; it was a three-feet-wide platform with a ladder of broken and rickety stairs that led to the back yard. And the yard! Broken cement floor littered with rubbish. Not a tree, not a blade of grass. But it was alive with infant life. Richard's brother Dannie, smaller, equally beautiful, was there; and little Jackie, their sister, still smaller and much, much dirtier—the classic image of a street gamin; she was without pants and Mrs. Duggan tittered everytime little Jackie lifted her dress to wipe her nose.

I could not express my excitement. This suddenly was not good or bad, this poverty and filth that was heaped before my sight for blocks around. The alleys with the horse manure; the yards with broken lumber and glass and piles of refuse. And over and in it these young lives, playing and screaming, dirty with the dirt of their playground but their eyes and spirits vibrant and exploring. In this, this utter poverty of a playground, there was this wonderfully alive community. I knew it, for my own youth had now returned to me with a dizzying effect. Little naked Jackie was the little Polish girl who would raise her dress when she was angry and point her little buttocks at me and tell me in Polish to kiss her there. This cement back yard of the Duggans was the back yard where I played even on Mondays when the clothes were being hung over the ropes that were strung across the yard. The landlady of our building would yell at me and yet I would return to play.

I asked Richard for the parachute and he threw it up to me. I threw it high into the air but the wind caught it and it was carried onto a nearby garage roof. In a few moments, Richard, barefooted and excited, was scaling the garage and quickly was on the roof. And oh glory be, it happened. A fine, huge woman, the owner of the garage, was pulling weeds out of her garden. She saw Richard and her ponderous frame readied for an attack. The declaration of war was in broken English. She cursed Richard and told him to get the hell away from the garage. Richard looked at her, said nothing, and then quickly got off the roof, the parachute safe in his hands.

And now Mr. Duggan must throw the parachute into the air. He threw it at a different angle to evade the lurking wind traps, but again the wind played tricks and the parachute fell on the same garage roof. Richard, fleet and silent, quickly scaled the wall of the garage; this time so that the landlady could not

see him. Little Jackie left her own games to watch her brother; something might happen this time—the enemy was aroused. And little Bob and Dannie were all holding their breath. And Richard was sighted when he was on the roof. The huge woman rushed to the garage with a broom as battle flag. She threatened Richard and cursed and lamented that children are so destructive. But she was no match for the lithe Richard, and he escaped.

And then with cinema-like effect, I saw Dannie and Bob and perhaps Richard too, at the age of twelve, for some twelve-year-old boys came out in the alley. They had washed after eating their suppers and I could feel how the faded washed denims felt on their thighs; they had on these silk-like shirts, unpressed and yet not in need of pressing; I knew what it was like to have on those shirts. These boys came in the alley with a tin can and one-inch flash firecrackers, the kind with the white powder. They had been trained; the training of wash your hands before you eat supper and comb your hair before you go out of the house and what will people think if I let you out of the house looking like a pig; this strange, refined training that still left them to play in their pigsties.

The boys placed a firecracker under the tin can but before they lighted the fuse their training made them ask the Duggans if they would mind if they played here. The Duggans said go ahead and then they called out to the children to get out of the way. The firecracker was lit and then boom and the tin can spun into the air hitting the maze of wires strung above and across the alley. The Duggans' neighbors were not as good-natured. The alley became full of screams of Dickie, Stella, Shirley, and screams of why don't you play by your own house. The boys moved on and the kids started to follow them. This increased the calls of the nervous parents who didn't want their children to stray too far from their own rubbish piles.

In the back porches of the houses facing the alley sat young girls too old to continue seeking their play pleasure in alleys. Like the twelve-year-old boys, their faces were scrubbed clean but they sat uncomfortably on porch rails in their neat but formless dresses. Their mothers would come on the porch and the daughters would look like quarters of a pound of young cheese cut from ripened and crevassed mother-cheese. Clean and scrubbed but transfixed with the sad demeanor of desire that had nowhere to go. For the adolescent girls, the neighborhood's pleasures had begun to run dry. They didn't play with their younger brothers and sisters in the alleys any more, they yelled at them from the back porches. You knew that now the girls had no love and could give no love. If the girls had no love they had torment, the torment of knowing no plate but their empty plate. Little Dannie and little Richard and little Jackie, there you are in six, seven years. The alleys are not playgrounds suddenly; they are dirty. All this beauty that you have made is going to look starved. You'll look at it and the broken roof of a shed will be a broken roof of a shed and not a chance to break some more rafters.

But now Richard and the children gave up the parachute and sought new pleasures. Richard found a long stick and disappeared with it into a deterior-

ated shed. We couldn't see him but soon we saw what was happening. The stick came pushing through some broken rafters. Richard was straining his young body and the roof of the old shed was giving way. Piece after piece came tumbling down from the shed. When he had made a large enough opening, Richard crawled through to the shed-roof and proclaimed himself king of the hill. Dannie flung stones and pieces of wood at his king-brother. Richard, quiet but gleeful, flung the stuff down, not at Dannie.

There were other kings: kings of property that came to battle the destroyers. I asked the Duggans who this man was that suddenly came into the alley. It was Mr. Fox, the Duggan's landlord. He didn't own the shed that was being destroyed but he had once lived in the building whose tenants used the shed and he still identified himself with that property. Mrs. Duggan told me that the landlord's wife complained about Richard's parents, who now lived in the flat that they had once occupied. They were so dirty. All the improvements that they had put in were just being destroyed by Richard's family. They had no manners and what could you then expect from their children? Anyway, what could you expect from somebody who would marry a Filipino?

I became a partisan of the Polish lady immediately and was ready to cry liar at the landlord's wife.

But the Duggan's landlord was magnificent now too. Despite his cries and tracking down of the culprit Richard, and his sermons delivered to Richard's mother, he was magnificent. To him the alleys were still playgrounds, the deterioration was still solid walls. He was as much a part of the vigorous alley-life as the children were. He did not curse the plight and desolation of his neighborhood; he was its guardian, its other wall of reality. He had vigor and fight: a broken-down shed, yes, but a shed that he had once used and it should not be further destroyed.

Mr. Fox was feverishly excited. "Who did it?" he called up to the Duggans. "Who did it?"

Mr. and Mrs. Duggan bobbed their heads in ignorance.

"Where's Bobbie?" Mr. Fox asked. "He'll tell me."

"Don't know,' Mrs. Duggan said, and then quietly so that the landlord could not hear her, "I'd break Bob's neck if he told on Richard."

Mr. Duggan murmured, "That shed should have been destroyed a long time ago."

Mr. Fox retreated to the caverns and the caves to accuse and await testimony and admission of guilt. After a few minutes we heard voices, including a high pip-squeak voice that was probably little Bob's. The trial was on.

We left the porch and returned to the dining-room to eat watermelon. The dining-room windows faced the rear porch of the Polish woman. Mrs. Duggan called my attention to Mr. Fox walking up the stairs holding Richard firmly by his wrist.

"Open the windows. I got to hear what Mr. Fox is going to say," I told Mrs. Duggan.

Mr. Fox indeed sermonized. Every third sentence was a maxim to guide

the rearing of the young. The Polish woman sat on the outside window ledge and listened in devout seriousness to Mr. Fox. The children were silent and stood close to their mother. It was wonderful. Nobody screamed, nobody yelled—there was a discussion, with Mr. Fox's fever obviously abating by the effect of the Polish woman's respectful behavior.

It was evident that the mother, a surprisingly young woman, had little opportunity to discuss the raising of children and here was garrulous Mr. Fox, double her age, the father of grown-up children—she listened to him and quickly confessed Richard's bad behavior. And Mr. Fox seemed to be having a fine time, and all the mean and cutting remarks that I had thought he would cry out were stilled. It was a philosophical discussion.

We heard the noisy clattering of a hammer coming from the back yard. Mrs. Duggan peered through the back windows and told us that Mr. Fox was repairing the ladder of rickety stairs. So Mr. Fox did not go home to sulk at the damage to the shed or to glory in his verbal finesse with the Polish woman. He was repairing the stairs.

Mrs. Duggan walked out on the back porch. "What are you doing?" I could hear her call out to Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox walked up the stairs to talk to Mrs. Duggan. "We're having some watermelon. Won't you come in and have a piece?" she asked.

"No, Mrs. Duggan, thank you. I like watermelon but I shouldn't eat any." His large-featured face smiled. "I could sit and eat watermelon by the hour and that's why I shouldn't eat any."

"Well, really then, Mr. Fox, you like it. Come in and have a piece."

"No, really, I couldn't. I had more than six glasses of limeade that my wife made for me before. I'm full of water up to here." Mr. Fox rested his finger against his neck. "But it's true. I don't eat watermelon. It's good, mind you, I got nothing against it but I don't eat it anymore."

Ah, I knew Mr. Fox now. I knew him as I knew the smells of Friday morning in my mother's kitchen. He had seen me through the back door. The Duggans were having a visitor and he was dressed so sloppily. So he liked watermelon and would eat it—he had lied because of me. But no, how stupid of me. Mr. Fox was not that simple. Even if at that moment it was proper for him socially to eat watermelon he might still refuse, for then he could make of reality an invigorating thing: invigorating because he could talk and explain how with him, if he liked a thing too much, he would give it up. He was no ordinary man.

"Later, Mrs. Duggan, if you don't mind, I'll come up for a little while," Mr. Fox said.

The Duggans told me about Mr. Fox. How he had been an art student when he was a young man and had gone to Paris to visit the Louvre. How an early marriage and early parenthood had made him slowly forsake his art until now all he had left of his dreams were big, ugly metal and marble statues that he kept in his house. From sculptor to automobile mechanic and nostalgic talk of his art days.

Mr. Duggan and I were playing chess when Mr. Fox returned. He was all cleaned up. His black curly hair glistened from a recent application of hair pomade and its former disarray had been measured down on his head. He had on a clean, green sport-shirt which he let hang out in the latest fashion. He had bathed and redressed since I had seen him last and all that was left as evidence of his recent repair work was the dirt under his fingernails.

He wrung my hand very cordially and hastened to assure us that we should continue our chess game, he would enjoy watching us very much. "That is, if you don't mind a kibitzer."

Mr. Fox looked at Mrs. Duggan who had fallen asleep on the couch. "Mrs. Duggan is all tired out," he said.

"She's resting," Mr. Duggan said.

"Sure, sure," the landlord said. "It ain't no easy thing for a woman to take care of a house and kids. They got to rest."

Mr. Duggan's chess game was slowly crumbling, and upon previous agreement—I was a more experienced player—I tried to explain the weaknesses in his game. I had explained how his opening lacked strength when Mr. Fox interrupted me.

"Pardon me. I don't want to stick my two cents in where I shouldn't but you are discussing the chess game anyway so I would like to say what I think. Of course, I haven't played chess for over ten years. It's a good game, I always like it, but you know how it is, I haven't had time to play it. But here is what I want to say. Isn't it better to take the offensive? The best way to win, you know, is to attack. Tell me, isn't that right?" Mr. Fox looked at me as the superior authority in these matters.

"Well, Mr. Fox," I said, "in the opening of the game you can plan an offensive but you don't necessarily attack immediately. Mr. Duggan's game was not weak because he didn't attack me at this point."

"True. True, but I mean in general it would be better to attack, isn't that so?"

How could I refuse him my admission of his wisdom. He had been so patient while we played in silence, not a kibitz out of him. And now that the chess world was expanding to include personalities and talk, could he remain silent and unrecognized?

Mr. Duggan was somewhat rankled by his landlord's interference. "You can never win, of course, if you just defend yourself. You have to attack sometimes if you are going to checkmate your opponent," he said.

"That's what I say," agreed Mr. Fox. "Of course, I don't remember all the fine points of the game, but in general you got to attack. You can't stay still."

The game continued in silence. Mr. Fox sat there quietly, watching the slow-moving game. He was silent and you could feel the struggle within him. How was he going to let me know what he *really* was like. Of course, it was not important that it was I that was to know him; any part of the world that eventually flowed to him must recede with knowledge of the preciousness of Mr. Fox.

During a lull in the game, when Mr. Duggan went to get some cold beer

from the ice box, I had the opportunity to learn something more about Mr. Fox.

"This is a nice chess set," he said.

"Pretty good," I said, with evident lack of enthusiasm, for it was not a nice chess set.

"It's not the best but it's a pretty nice set. I once saw a beautiful set made in France. Peasant carvings. Oh, that was something." His body seemed to grow more alive. "I was going to buy it, but it was $300 and I thought that that was too much. Besides I had a beautiful plastic set, one of the first plastic sets made, I think." His rough voice seemed to soften with the word "plastic."

"You had it?" I questioned.

"I don't have it anymore. I traded it."

"You traded it?"

"You see, I am somewhat a student of art." He smiled; his body relaxed; he was reverent towards himself. But that is unfair to Mr. Fox. He was not displaying egotism, he was paying a tribute to art. The reverence was not towards himself but was towards the holy mention of his great love.

Mr. Duggan returned with four glasses and a quart of beer. He awoke Mrs. Duggan, who with sleepy grace poured the beer down the sides of the glasses. The impromptu ceremonial preparations for the drinking of the beer brought forth Mr. Fox's best social behavior. He thanked the hostess, held the glass close to his lips until all the glasses were raised, sipped lightly, and placed the glass down on the table after making certain that the bottom of the glass was not wet. "Nothing like a good glass of beer in hot weather," he said.

I guess that Mr. Duggan was still perturbed by Mr. Fox's earlier comments about the chess game, for he said, "But not as good as a glass of real French wine."

Mr. Fox refused Mr. Duggan's gambit; he was not an exhibitionist. He fights best who chooses his own battle ground. "Beer is better than wine in hot weather," he said.

Silently I cheered Mr. Fox. It was no longer a game when you put the victory in your opponent's lap. Mr. Fox would create his own opportunity to tell me that he had been to Paris.

And he did. We talked about movies and he told me about a French movie he had recently seen and he told me that it didn't compare to the movies he saw when he was living in Paris. Mr. Fox revealed his inner possessions as a young girl might display the personal little things that she keeps in her bedroom to her ardent suitor who visits her when her parents are away.

It was late and I had to leave. Mr. Fox seemed momentarily lonely and deprived when I said that I had to leave. He had given and it was being taken away.

I left through the back entrance. I would walk to the street car through the alleys. In the alley I saw a twelve-year-old boy, with a shirt on that I knew so well, the clean, silk-feel of it on a boyish chest, eating an ice cream cone. He had been given his daily summer nickel. Was it wrong then to feel a loneliness in the young boy—his clean shirt and clean face—eating an ice cream cone in the darkened alley, walking home where he would soon have to go to bed?

MILTON KAPLAN:

The Naked

As you grew older, remember how you wound
The woolen peace around your chilling mind
To pad the senses soft in flesh? And as
The daily headlines froze, remember how
The movies flickered gaily in the grate,
And you pressed your nose against the clouded glass
To shiver with the cold you could not feel?
You stuffed the spreading crevices of eyes
And ears and mouth with faded rags and warmed
Your folded hands on glowing words until
The sun was posted bright on every billboard
In the land, and the radio blazed in every hearth.

This is a naked time: the winter wind
Underlines the trembling flesh with bone.
You rub the dry words of your faith to stir
The Onan-spark of a remembered warmth
And wrap a threadbare silence tight around
Your thin identity, and try to sleep.
Shivering, you lie awake, stroking the fur
Of memory with automatic mind
To conjure up the flossy feel of peace
That tricks you into dreams of winter lined
With wool or summer secretly alive
With promises of whispered silk as Truth
Trips down Fifth Avenue, provocative
In stockings and a nippled lace brassiere—
Until the wind plucks at your winding sheet
And strips you to the prickled skin of fear.

RICHARD EBERHART:

Poem

Sometimes the longing for death,
Imaginative death, comes hard.
Not the unimaginable, last gasp,
But lift to supernatural love.

And sometimes death is achieved
In the visionary place of the mind,
New life, painful no more,
Where hope does not need to deter us.

Is it for this, most personal, most secure
Life turns, in goodness, and in evil
To tear our wits out of our wills
To its built, tremendous godhead?

The Vision of the Swans

The swans on the torrid pond
Of a Pennsylvania farm
Perplexed him with their sexual élan
When viewed from the barn.

They seemed a symbol of truth,
Fertile they were, yet sterile
White swans on the water
Beautiful to herald.

They would do, yes, they would do
For vigors and for visions,
The mind was never one, but two
White swans within the swimmer.

And why not resolve it all
In the swans at a white heat,
And with a laudation them call
Saying, You are all, are all!

The Drunkard

Had tottered on the ground step of God's worn house,
Sunk in, and been fortune's wormy pillar,
Poured, weary, in a pool grim and purple,
And could not get up. Nor years by lively beer
Rehearsed recoil of a sumpter beast in Persia.
Oozes apart, seems in the blotch an homing.
The mouth, stoniest; cheek-bones build farewell walls.
And in, somewhere, the temple, with golden talents laid up.

Thickets of wind, hot, prick the market place.
Millions, breathers, make the gesture of the straight line
In intimate, in intricate network and pathways.

Still men like hawk-like ribbons like hunt-fields flow.
In of themselves wing-undulations along they go
Earth's old co-minglers who want what they know.

And soon, by evaporation bitter, the dusty pool
Colors cut, absorbed by pavement and pillar,
While, then, reds were lastly taken from the temple.

JOHN V. KELLEHER:

Joyce Digested

JOSEPH CAMPBELL and HENRY MORTON ROBINSON: *A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake.* Harcourt, Brace.

A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake is, I find, a hard book to make up one's mind about; and in writing this review I've had time to make up two or three ordinary minds like my own. Perhaps the trouble arises from a disharmony between the double authorship of the book and the single responsibility announced in the authors' foreword. The authors assume the indivisible "we": the reader yet hesitates to attack both for either's sins. It is Robinson after all, and not Campbell, who is the *Reader's Digest* editor. Presumably the chewed-up version of Joyce's text is his idea and mostly his personal result. Campbell, on the other hand, is the student of Irish matters. Should we blame Robinson for taking Campbell's word for it that St. Malachy was made Bishop of Dublin in 1132 A. D., or for not knowing what it was Campbell's business to know, that "he-bear and hairy mon" are Eber and Eremon, mythical leaders of the mythical Celtic invasion of Ireland? And so on and on. It hardly seems fair to kick them both indiscriminately an average of a dozen times for each page. Yet nobody else wrote the book; and kicks *are* in order, if only to clear away one's own anger and come at last by a decently fair-minded estimate of what they have written.

There is no doubt that the job they attempted needs to be done. Nor can anyone question their courage in attempting it. But why choose the method they used? Even a *Reader's Digest* editor ought to know, or be able at least to learn, that Joyce is no nickel-a-word magazine stuffer, and that his labor of eighteen years in freighting language with a multiple burden is exactly what can be elucidated, if by any re-expression, only by extended paraphrase. In attempting to condense his text, all they have been able to do is to cut it up into scraps and paste some of the scraps together again in a way that may or may not make sense but never makes Joyce's sense. This foreshortened text makes up about eighty percent of the *Skeleton Key*. That is my first comment.

The other twenty percent is divided between commentaries—a general one for the whole of *Finnegans Wake* and individual ones for each chapter—and footnotes. The commentaries are quite good—as good, anyway, as anyone else's explanation of the story. The footnotes are unreliable. Some are wrong. Some are sort of stupid, like the one on p. 204 (referring to p. 317 of the *Wake*). which hails the first appearance of the John Peel motif. Some, like the "kiber galler" note on p. 206, have a sort of Banks' Horse academic naiveté. And for the rest—how can one judge?

The central weakness of the *Skeleton Key* is not, however, primarily trace-

able to its mechanical failures. These—the digested text perhaps most of all—are heavily influenced by a fundamental misconception on Campbell and Robinson's part of the importance of Joyce's last great work. They spend all their energy in a do-or-die attempt to extract the story from Joyce's language: in the process mangling the language beyond recognition or knocking the meaning out of it along with the plot. Their excuse is the obvious one, that the story is "a mighty allegory of the fall and redemption of mankind . . . a strange book, a compound of fable, symphony, and nightmare—a monstrous enigma." It is, they insist, "a huge time-capsule, a complete and permanent record of our age. If our society should go to smash tomorrow . . . one could find all the pieces, together with the forces that broke them, in *Finnegans Wake.*"

This is just too large an order even for enthusiastic Joyceans. The truth is where Harry Levin put it in his review of the *Skeleton Key* (*New Republic,* July 24, 1944: pp. 306-307). "Joyce's exponents are still suffering from an excess of hierophantic zeal, a belief that what must be so laboriously decoded must somehow contain a message of mystic profundity. His real secrets are matters of literary technique, which the present study scarcely professes to explore."

From that basic mistake of Campbell and Robinson's any number of their other errors follow naturally. They have failed to see that Joyce's originality lay always in his use of language and not in his use of themes, for he discovered no new themes and never professed to. Resurrection is dealt with at least as powerfully in the Bible as in *Finnegans Wake,* and with as much detail in the *Golden Bough.* Continuity, death, and recurrence have exercised man's thoughts before this. Where Joyce is first is in creating a means at once economical enough and suggestive enough to tell of the likeness and difference of a great theme and of the separate examples of its occurrence, and to do this at a tolerable length and without drying the sap out of his subject. His method did not yield sure results. Parts of the *Wake* simply do not repay the reader's effort, let alone Joyce's in composing them. But where he succeeded, he succeeded so magnificently and with such undeniable rightness that no one, who has read and begun to understand the book, can doubt that a revolution in the use and conception of language dates from its publication.

The story is, of course, profound, as one would expect from any story a man of Joyce's capabilities judged worthy of such extended care and effort. And dealing with the great mysteries, it is mystical. And it is, thank God, funny, too. But the nature of the story to be told in *Finnegans Wake* follows of necessity the nature of the style in which Joyce chose to tell it. In the finished book there is no separating them, or saying, this came first and that after: yet the technique is, throughout, the guiding element.

To start with, Joyce squared up to the linguistic problem in which we are all involved, recognizing that today each man is his own Tower of Babel, that the Dispersion of Tongues is within us. Each of us speaks not one language but several, and we do not know how to equate them or use them together in a sustained expression of related ideas. Our languages are like our friends:

we can't get them all together, introduce them to each other, and get them working together, unless we get them drunk enough to lie around together at a common, if low, level. A man who has tried to introduce his different sets of friends to each other while sober knows that the results are most horrid. It's the same with languages or technical dialects—the result is a hotch-potchedty jargon through which sense falls as through a sieve. Technical or professional languages have their reason for existence in that they're supposed to make things clear and simple by economy. Most of them do to a limited extent. But a language should also be a means of general communication, and we all know how allied fields of thought are now separated from each other by hedges of jargon. A man can't even note down his own thoughts without running into the difficulties thus raised. He may be able to use two of his dialects at once—like standard English and slang, or mathematics and the trade talk of biochemistry. But for the rest—if his ideas spread over a wide enough area—he has to resort to paraphrase and circumlocution and, time and again, strain the matrix language to force his meaning into it in any fashion.

When Joyce undertook to make all languages and terminologies work together for him in *Finnegans Wake* he had to get them drunk, to bring them down to the common, if low, level—the "rag and bone shop of the mind . . . where all ladders start." And what was his intoxicant? Why, naturally, myth and mystery. The story to be told was dictated as soon as he scribbled his first note. If Campbell and Robinson had seen this, they wouldn't, one may hope, have slit his language to ribbons to get the golden plot out of it. They might even have gone less hurriedly galloping through the book, and have had time enough to notice that the sense is not evenly distributed, but gathered nodally at the key points. For there are key points; and though the book is supposedly written in a circular fashion, with the beginning anywhere, most of them are where you'd expect to find them—in the first chapter. There Joyce sets his themes, tells what has happened, and warns of what will happen again. But Campbell and Robinson, after doing a very good job on the first four paragraphs—a job which shows that they know how to work the text, if necessary—deal with the rest of the chapter in fourteen pages of digest and notes. At that they take time out for a full page of numerology about as relevant as it is enlightening. "Man rooted in the Trinity yet falling 32 feet per second," forsooth.

Draw rein, draw breath, and note how, the numerology aside, they skitter over that passage, which is written with as indicative a concentration as any in the book, and which in both its form and its subjects, occurs again and again in endless transformations. It comes on pages 13 and 14 of the *Wake* and is dealt with on page 45 of the *Skeleton Key*. Four psuedo-historical events are described, referring in turn to HCE, to ALP, to Iseult, daughter of HCE and ALP, and to the twins, Shawn and Shem. That much Campbell and Robinson have got. They have also seen that the twins are also St. Lawrence O'Toole, who *was* Bishop of Dublin, and Henry II, the first English king to claim sovereignty over Ireland. But they go no further. Too eager to get over to their

cockeyed numerology, they sweep along with "The actual historical events associated with the dates 1132 A. D. and 566 A. D. are of minor importance. Clearly more important than any specific events are the relationships to each other of the numbers themselves . . ." Tarry a while, says Slow. Let's have a closer look at their method.

The first event, in Joyce's words, is this:

> 1132 A. D. Man like to ants or emmets wondern upon a groot hwide Whallfisk which lay in a runnel. Blubby wares upat Ublanium.

As Campbell and Robinson have it:

> 1132 A. D. Men like ants did wander upon the hump of *an old whale* stranded in a runnel. Blubber for Dublin.

Well, outside of putting a hump on Joyce's whale and deleting words that may suggest a connection between HCE as the whale and Wellington's "big wide harse," what else have they done except save two words, one of which is "emmet," suggestive enough to Irish ears? They make no mention of the Communion theme, which is clearly enough intended, since the historical event referred to is when Dublin men did eat whales—in 1331, when a school of turleyhides cast up on the strand averted a famine. If there can be any doubt that Joyce had this in mind, look on page 46 of *Ulysses,* where Stephen, walking on the strand, meditates on the event.

Now try the second. Joyce has it thus:

> 566 A. D. On Baalfire's night of this year after deluge a crone that hadde a wickered Kish for to hale dead turves from the bog lookit under the blay of her Kish as she ran for to sothisfeige her cowrieosity and be me sawl but she found herself sackvulle of swart goody quickenshoon and small illigant brogues, so rich in sweat. Blurry works at Hurdleford.

This comes out in the *Skeleton Key* as:

> 566 A. D. *A crone* discovered her basket to be full of little shoes. Blurry works at Dublin.

Economy with a vengeance. Particularly saving of sense. They've guessed that the crone is Anna Livia Plurabelle, the mother spirit, the River Liffey—but what else? How about the "wickered Kish" being the wickerwork hurdles of the ford over the Liffey from which Dublin gets its Gaelic name, Baile Atha Cliath, the town of the hurdle ford? Or how about the crone being a "crown"—in this case Henry II, who had a wickerwork pavilion outside Dublin from which he received the homage of the Irish kings and princes? As it happens, what Henry wanted out of Ireland—as expressly provided for in the Treaty of Windsor—was hides. This being so, the Crown having a wickered Kish (basket) "to hale dead turves from the bog" makes good sense. "Turves" obviously is linked with the Irish *tarbh* (pronounced "tor-ruv")—"a bull"—and

the "bog" is Ireland. And the Crown looking under the *belay* of his Kish finds himself full of the homage and submission of the Irish princelings, so rich and sweet, so richly to be sweated. Indeed, he is "sackvulle" of them, Sackville being an English Lord Lieutenant or Vice-roy of Ireland.

There's a lot more to it. "Cowrie" from "cowrieosity" is Dr. Curry, founder of the Catholic Committee, a movement agitating for Catholic Emancipation which was taken over by O'Connell, the Irish orator, and turned into a Nationalist party full as you please of "small illigant brogues." "Sawl" is a man named Saul, a Catholic whose niece and ward was abducted from him by her Protestant relatives, and whose case led to the founding of the Catholic Committee. The girl's name is referred to, concurrently with Vanessa's, in the third of these paragraphs. But let us go on to the fourth.

> 1132 A. D. Two sons at an hour were born until a goodman and his hag. These sons called themselves Caddy and Primas. Primas was a santryman and drilled all decent people. Caddy went to Winehouse and wrote o peace a farce. Blotty words for Dublin.

Which becomes:

> 1132 A. D. *Twin sons* were born, Caddy and Primas, to a goodman and his hag. Primas became a sentryman. Caddy got drunk and wrote a farce. Blotty words for Dublin.

And there is a footnote to it:

> 1132 A. D. St. Malachy became Bishop of Dublin, and Lawrence O'Toole was born. O'Toole and Henry II being representatives of the brother pair, perhaps we are to think of them as the twins, respectively Caddy and Primas, born in 1132. Henry II was born, actually, in 1131, only a few months before O'Toole.

Now that is a good example of what I meant earlier when I said that the footnotes are unreliable. St. Malachy was Primate of Armagh, but never Bishop of Dublin. He was elected Primate in 1132, but because of trouble in getting the symbol of Primacy—the *Bacall Iosa,* Jesus staff—from the hereditary co-arbs of Armagh, he didn't actually assume office till 1134. Since his controversy with the co-arbs strengthened his determination to effect the Roman reformation of the Celtic Church, and led him to play into the hands of the only English Pope—Adrian IV—the one who made the bull—this point is of great interest to Joyce's story, as the Fable of the Mookse and the Gripes will evince.

As for the exact date of Lawrence O'Toole's birth, it's unknown. Estimates vary all the way from 1128 to 1133. So how anyone could know the approximate number of months between Henry II's birthdate and O'Toole's is something that ought to be explained.

But to get back to the event and its ghost. One feels that Campbell and Robinson ought to let us know how they identified Lawrence O'Toole and Henry II as the twins. Was it from this or from the Mookse and the Gripes? There are plenty of clues in the paragraph, as Joyce gives it, but the boys don't

seem to have picked them up. "Caddy got drunk and wrote a farce" is a pretty poor paraphrase of "Caddy went to Winehouse and wrote o peace a farce," for it leaves out the idea of O'Toole's going to England as emissary of Rory O'Connor, the Irish High King, and negotiating the Treaty of Windsor with Henry II: a peace which was indeed a farce.

As for Henry II as Primas-Shawn—he becomes a "sentryman." Well, he does indeed. We know that Shawn becomes a policeman. But "santryman" is something else besides. Lord Santry was the first man tried for murder by the Irish House of Lords. Henry's implication in the murder of Thomas-a-Becket has been discussed by several writers, most of whom agree that a-Becket was a decent person.

As for the names Caddy and Primas, Caddy also means "First," from the Irish *cead*.

It may be objected that this is going into too much detail. I don't think so. All four of these events point up what is to come, show how the characters are interrelated, demonstrate in miniature the connection Joyce wants the reader to perceive as existing between the elements of the story and the great themes they signify. And anyway, what I've picked out are only the Irish details. There is a great deal more to be found in the leavings.

I said in the beginning that I find it hard to make up my mind about the *Skeleton Key*. It must seem now from what I've written that my mind is made up like an inspection bed. It isn't. The book infuriates me only because there is so much good stuff in it, all obscured and devaluated by the rest. Campbell and Robinson have done a very intelligent job of elucidating certain portions of Joyce's text. They have discovered new references, expanded the use of the old ones, and proved, by their handling of the first four paragraphs, that they could do a good job on any part of the text, if they would. Their synopsis of the story, as given in the commentaries, is interesting and clear, if more than a bit slender. But their digest I cannot forgive, nor their sloppy footnotes, nor the cheap cleverness that makes them conceal their ignorance. After all, any permanent value the book might have would be in the character it misses having because of its faults: the character of an open, intelligent, honest conversation between two experienced readers of Joyce and all other readers of Joyce. As it is, all the book is good for is to show newcomers that the *Wake* has a connected understandable story, and to stimulate them to read it. Once into the *Wake* itself they must find that the *Skeleton Key* is no safe guide, and too often is just plain misleading. I wish Campbell and Robinson, grown honest, would melt the *Key,* refine it, and make an honest jimmy out of it. The only admission to *Finnegans Wake* is still through the back windows.

JEREMY INGALLS:

ALLEN TATE: *The Winter Sea.* The Cummington Press.

With Allen Tate's eight poems, in the handsome volume prepared by the Cummington Press, I had been prepared to be profoundly impressed. I confess to some disappointment. "More Sonnets at Christmas" are here; and, removed from the context of the collection, they retain the sharp collision of image, the wry wit wedded to sincere concern before an essential concept haunting the twentieth-century mind. "Jubilo" is here, its righteous angers sliding double entendre of the old song and the new and ugly fact. By itself, even "Ode to Our Young Proconsuls of the Air," despite the mélange of true satire and merest clever rhyme, arrests the ear and the mind. But these same poems, read within the sequence, suffer by the recurrence of their weaker devices in other poems of the group; the deliberate bathos of "Eclogue of the Liberal and the Poet" and "The Trout Map," by their exhibition of deliberation, fail of effect. The "Eliotic"—to borrow Tate's own term—voice of many verses out-talks Tate's own voice, as in "False Nightmare," the last six stanzas, concluding:

> The fallow graves, ponds
> Full of limp fish, tall
> Terrain, fields and fronds
> Through which we crawl and call.

"Winter Mask to the Memory of W. B. Yeats," in itself an expectedly expert accomplishment, provides, perhaps, a partial explanation of some of the difficulty in *The Winter Sea.* Tate's skill blends, in this polished single work, his own voice with appropriately chosen effects from Yeats' own rhetoric. In other poems the "Eliotic" voice, as of the Eliot-proxy who "sat upon the shore / Fishing, with the arid plain behind" is, I have no doubt, also a deliberately chosen echo, especial intention, to reinforce Tate's satiric passages. But the recurrent dog-bones, the other bearing-a-known-signature images for rottenness, the familiar satiric devices recapitulated, in this re-use, however intentional, chop bluntly, as a dagger, once sharp in unexpected encounter, goes dull from much use and is less effective against a now prepared enemy. The "winter sea," as symbol, suffers from interference by Eliotic and other known voices; as Allen Tate's own concept it does not tune in clearly.

Nevertheless, the complex sound, the figures peculiarly Tate's are also here, most superbly in the Autumn section of "Seasons of the Soul"; also in "Albino man bleached from the mortal clay" and other lines, from the "Sonnets"; also his characteristic aptness of comment, condensing an era into brief, on-the-mark:

> In a much later age
> (Europe had been in flames)
> Proud Wilson yielded ground
> To franc and pound,
> Made pilgrimage
> In the wake of Henry James.

Despite the awkward smartness of many rhymes in the "Proconsuls," the tasteless passage on the "beetle," the uninspired use of "rat," the comment in conclusion has validity: that which we slay has been slain already—

> Upon the Tibetan plain
> A limping caravan,
> Dive and exterminate
> The Lama, late
> Survival of old pain.
> Go and kill the dying swan.

"Jubilo," "Yeats," and the "Sonnets" seem to me to be completely successful, technically sound, as Tate's best work always is, and of content permanently valuable in the history of the

imagination in this time. The sometimes arch and, as I have already remarked, the often too-familiar devices in the last four poems make me wish the last three had been omitted and make me hope, having heard of Tate's scrupulous habits of revision, that we may sometime have the "Proconsuls" in a revised edition. "Seasons of the Soul" is meticulously worked; the progress of the argument, expressly timed with recurrent sound and cumulative refrains. Since this is the first and also the longest of the eight poems, I assume it is intended to set the thesis and to state most explicitly the poet's state of mind. Except for the "Autumn" section and in spite of the consistent elegance of style, I find a constriction of imagination, a dependence on what might be called the currently fashionable vocabulary in poetry, which, read in the context of the whole book, reinforces my impression that the static of other voices persistently interrupts Tate's program. Respecting Allen Tate as I do, I would assume these "interferences" are not unconscious. But his polemic, personal or public, operates more vigorously whenever it eludes the adjacent frequencies. Any book by an artist as versatile as Allen Tate must be reckoned with in any serious history of American poetry; in this essay at justice in comment, I have tried to indicate aspects of this collection which may affect a later reckoning.

JOHN HUDSON JONES:

RICHARD WRIGHT: *Black Boy.* Harpers.

Black Boy is not a conventional autobiography. It is a creative psychological narrative depicting the South's social onslaught against one human being—a Negro who has developed into one of America's best writers. It fuses the descriptive technique of the novel with poetic imagery and symbolism, to slash and hack open the cancer of race prejudice. One can see, hear, and feel the foulness, the diabolical cleverness, and the brutal effects of this ancient social evil that is designed to twist, warp, and stultify the Negro individual.

The Wright family was a blighted one. His father's desertion of his mother caused her and the two sons to suffer abject poverty. His paralytic mother was quick to anger, and his uncles, aunts, and grandmother kept him in a constant state of neurotic terror by whippings, religious fanaticism, and the other irrational actions that are peculiar to the poor and uneducated. His entire childhood was filled with the most debasing experiences possible in civilized society. He drank, he cursed, he fought, he hated. His uncle was murdered by white men, and a young friend was lynched. And yet at an early age a thirst for learning and artistic expression began to manifest itself. "The eighth grade days flowed in their angry path and I grew more conscious of myself; I sat in classes, bored, wondering, dreaming. One long dry afternoon I took out my composition book and told myself that I would write a story; it was sheer idleness that led me to it." And then when he had written it his grandmother said that it was "the Devil's work," his mother accused him of being weak-minded, and his Uncle Tom said the story had no point. These and other experiences so shocked his keen sensitivity that a flaming desire was kindled within him to escape his oppressors both white and black. "I dreamed of going north and writing books, novels. The North symbolized to me all that I had not felt and seen; it had no relation whatever to what actually existed. Yet by imagining a place where everything was possible, I kept hope alive in me."

But if *Black Boy* is to be accorded critical evaluation in terms of its own greatness, bare impressionist praising and restating of facts and passages does not suffice. Here is the most serious indictment that any artist has ever leveled at American society. Its implications are, as most critics have rushed to say, terrifying. For though it can be ascertained that Wright's experiences are not typical, the fact is that in our society such things are possible. And, if such monstrous social forces are in action on one individual, the life of every American is touched and tainted by them.

Black Boy artistically re-creates what countless sociologists have hashed and rehashed for years. Its poignant descriptive images portray in intimate terms the mass psychosis that the South's economy of fear has produced in both whites and Negroes. This basic pattern of fear developing separately in the two groups has countless manifestations in everyday life. And though Wright

deals with the South, they occur in varied degrees all over the United States. The pattern ranges from the physical terror of the South's lynching to the many forms of psychological intimidation such as calling Negro men "boy," "Sam," "Rastus," etc.; or in the North and East, where its forms are more subtle, a close political or working associate will greet one with an ebullient "yowsah."

This multi-varied pattern provokes as many reactions. In the South from helpless resentment or cringing servility to anarchistic rebellion, such as "taking some whites with you before finally being hung or burned"; or elsewhere, from the bitterness of the college graduate carrying bags to the apprehension that wells up in the stoutest hearts when Southern soldiers or sailors are encountered in the subway, in places of amusement, or on the street.

Richard Wright has constructed an elaborate framework for his youthful psychological experiences. The materials are overt actions (his, the family's, whites', neighbors', etc.) and emotional reactions (his). In the re-creation of these experiences he develops communication by a highly stylized medium of concise and pungent sentences, though in many instances he employs rolling lyrical passages. The dialogue is incredibly natural and folksy. But in all this vigorous writing Wright has limited himself to a intense subjectivity which indicates the beginning of a great danger that he must see and overcome. To be sure, *Black Boy* is the story of his own youth, but there is little effort on the part of "Wright the man and artist" to re-create the experiences of "the boy Richard" as an organic part of the social picture. This intense subjectivity while brilliant and original lacks the profundity that a more inclusive treatment could have achieved. Hence there is to be noted in the attitude of "Wright the man and artist" a disdainful preoccupation with the interpretation of only his experiences.

Is this a conscious development of his artistic and social credo? The answer can be found in his own excellent essay, "A Blue Print for Negro Writers" (*New Challenge Magazine,* Fall, 1937), in which he deals with the technical and philosophical problems that confront Negro writers, and concludes that they must acquire a deep understanding of society in general, the Negro people in particular, and themselves in relation to both. The answer to the proposed question is *no.* But *Black Boy* indicates a serious crisis for Richard Wright.

The factors of his problem are visible and form the framework of an equation. On the one hand, a highly developed intellect and acute artistic sensitivity that has arisen in conflict with and in spite of its oppressive environment. On the other, the environment that hasn't changed its spots but which, in reaction to the struggle of the individual to achieve thorough intellectual emancipation, changes its *modus operandi* from the cruder forms to the more insidious drives of psychic tension that creates a feeling of isolation and hostility between the individual intellectual and the social group. Somewhere along the line and for reasons that cannot be gathered in their entirety from *Black Boy,* Wright has relaxed his social vigilance. And since, as he himself says, the artist is a social being, it shows in his art!

It is painful indeed at this late date to remind Wright that he has gathered his singing strength from his people. He has the potentials of an American giant. Suffice it to say that if he does completely forget it, his songs will die and he will become a rotted victim of the embittering acids of American race prejudice.

CONRAD AIKEN: *The Soldier.* New Directions.

Conrad Aiken's talents, rich and various as they undeniably are, seem not quite able to lift this long poem above the commonplace, though it is a close thing in some of the passages. Certainly the triteness of theme is a handicap from the start—man's mind is a world, and we are all soldiers in the eternal fight to conquer ourselves, to reconcile the real and the ideal. It would take a high degree of tension and complexity to turn the statements into realized experiences; Mr. Aiken relies on solemnity of tone and hymn-like affirmation; the ethical pill is musically sugar-coated, but too obviously medicinal. The spirit strives ever upward, war winnows out all things opposed to progress, saves all which advance it—this is all too facile. Though it is unfair in so brief a review to make inclusive judgments without exemplification, this will have to stand, in spite of technical felicities, as my impression of the total poem.

MONA VAN DUYN

RAFAEL ALBERTI: *Selected Poems,* translated by Lloyd Mallan. New Directions.

PABLO NERUDA: *Selected* Poems, translated by Angel Flores. Pan-American Union.

According to Lloyd Mallan, Alberti is "internationally . . . perhaps the most important poet of the new generation in Spanish literature." Too ignorant of contemporary Spanish poetry to confirm or deny that statement (assuming the "perhaps" is not too seriously intended), I am glad nevertheless to testify to the high quality of Alberti's poetry. The present selection begins with early small poems that show good technique and nice, fresh, functional imagery. It progresses through a series of more ambitious and usually looser poems, in tones ranging from farcical to elegiac, up to the longest in the book, "To See and Not to See You," an elegy for the bullfighter Ignacio Sanchez Mejias. It is nothing unusual for an elegist to proceed in terms of high personal tragedy, but somewhat unusual for him to sustain such terms and make them good; Alberti does. If I might analyze "To See and Not to See You," I should have a good deal to say about the considerable use of water imagery in this poem of a bullring death. The last in the book are poems of the Spanish civil war. In them perception, or poetic texture, is partially sacrificed to idea; "And After the War" indicates that Alberti realized this. To generalize: a reader can usually most quickly "spot" the work of a good poet by the freshness, force, appropriateness, and location of the images it contains. Alberti's poetry is excellent as to the first three. If it is less notable as to the highly important matter of location, heaven knows it has plenty of company.

The motive for making poetry is the desire to know, control, perpetuate, celebrate; incidentally, the measurable contents of the world, but primarily, one's own or others' wonderful human reactions to them. If you just enumerate, in more or less rhythmic language, many fine emotion-provoking things or situations, you have done a considerable part of your work, in that you have focused attention where you believe it deserves to be focused, and your reader can go on for himself (not that he is likely to). But much remains to do. Pretty often, in this selection, Neruda presents the materials of poetry say two-thirds processed—very nice, but lacking the final shape and polish. Yet there is a number of exceptions, where more carefully applied intellectual discipline makes very good and reasonably complete poems: "Death Alone," for instance," and "Explaining a Few Things," and "Almeira," among others. The last two are poems of the Spanish civil war, strong and bitter. In these and in other poems of the war, structure is improved without damage to other elements of the poetry. Apparently the shock of the war was good for Neruda as a poet.

W. R. MOSES

RICHARD EBERHART: *Selected Poems.* New Directions.

In the new poems, the particular talents of Mr. Eberhart, which are his personal baroque imagery, controlled form and colorful orchestration, emerge almost continually in the shorter poems; these are distinguished with "the beautiful disrelation of the spiritual." The war themes and philosophical explorations comprise the main fabric of his poetry; and these are usually contrapuntally mixed with cross-music and two languages, expository and poetic. Again it is true of the shorter poems and the earlier selections, the best Eberhart poetry, not unlike Empson's, charms as it convinces. With these talents so controlled, I find it strange that so good an artist as Mr. Eberhart would try to make from his penchant for wit and buffoonery another talent and combine it with his true poetic ones: briefly that is, in my opinion, the artistic fault with "Triptych," which should have been his best poem in the volume. At least the raw material is there; but almost incessantly his good poetry in "Triptych" breaks its consistency and sustainment the instant he becomes clever. The Air-eater cannot laugh his way through a dialectic, which is fundamentally sound, and compose either satirical or metaphysical poetry: satire must still be written from a vigorous and working indignation.

ROBERT RICHMAN

WILLIAM EVERSON: *War Elegies* and *Waldport Poems.* Untide Press (Waldport, Oregon).

Everson, "unwilling to preach, disliking the odor of any crusade," does not care to laugh, disdains weeping, is not interested in how the world ends. No irony either: one "elegy" deals

with Mr. Winston Churchill on the air and yet none of the vulnerabilities of The Man and The Empire are noted. No spleen. Almost what Anglicans call "mindfulness of others." What Everson would like to do is understand. Since this is so and his material is mostly the war and what he did (or didn't) do about it, he is virtually in a class by himself. His faith is in the liberal virtues of truth and reason ("program for action based on repose") and—one peculiar to his vocabulary, as the Deity is never about—"morality," which even the liberals won't have. So it is he stays fairly close to shore, only occasionally treading the deeper water of his imagination ("The low freighters at sea / Take in their sides the nuzzling dolphins that are their death.") He should do it more often.

Perhaps most of all he is repentant—"I, the living heir / Of the bloodiest men of all Europe . . . who bore in their loins the warped seed / That never forgot." The Future:

> Frozen and formed in the stone ranges beyond our sight,
> Yields only the iridescent trickle
> That bleeds from its throat.

These two volumes, "executed upon a clam-action monster of incalculable vintage" by a group of conscientious objectors concentrated, like Everson, in a labor camp on the wilderness coast of Oregon, are beautifully printed and the illustrations, especially those by Kemper Nomland, are excellent, and startlingly so.

J. F. POWERS

Hundred Towers, a Czechoslovak Anthology edited by F. C. Weiskopf. L. B. Fischer.

This collection of modern Czechoslovak writing, edited by a noted German-Czech refugee, is a useful book, suggesting the advantages and limitations of the Procustian frame of an anthology. It contains complete or fragmentary writings by twenty-four writers of prose and poetry, a poem by an unnamed Czech poet, written under Nazi occupation, a preface by the editor, and bibliographical notes. Evidently Weiskopf's intentions were literary and political. Internationally known Czech writers—*e.g.,* Karel Capek and Jaroslav Hasek—and writers and poets unknown abroad, but recognized in their native land are represented. The advantage of the anthology lies in its newness as far as the English-speaking world is concerned; its drawback is the inevitable fragmentariness of its character. For instance, F. X. Salda, the best modern Czech literary critic, is represented by an essay—it must have been intended for a lecture originally—entitled "Poetry, Immortality and Eternity"; although it is intelligent and discriminating, it has so many obvious statements that it does not render justice to the undeniable critical acumen of the author. The general tone of the anthology is petit bourgeois, humanitarian or social. The total impression of the anthology is that it is a fair attempt, a promise for a later growth.

JOSEPH REMENYI

RUTH LECHLITNER: *Only the Years.* The James A. Decker Press.

Those who are acquainted with the thoughtful and sensitive and sensible poems of Ruth Lechlitner will find here a selection from the best of her work for the last seven years. It is always interesting to see what is left from such a period that the poet considers worth keeping. The barrel of apples is sorted over and those that were not so good to begin with must be the first that are thrown away. Only those that have remained firm and whole are kept to set the teeth into. By this sort of selection the course of a career is shaped.

It is evident that this poet has no embarrassing scarcity of material from which to choose, for in these poems there are no abrupt and counter currents in manner, so familiar in such collections, nor is there that common devitalization that comes on after a style is formed, like a stiffness following the setting of a bone. These thirty pieces, she has decided, are good, are her best, and each poem is a proof of the soundness of that decision.

HOWARD NUTT

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